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PROGRESS AND RETROGRESSION.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

NEARLY half a century ago there appeared in England a work by the eminent poet laureate, Robert Southey, under the title of *Sir Thomas More; or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society*. The book was a singular one in construction for that remote period, purporting to be a series of conversations upon various subjects, in the interests of humanity, between the writer and the *materialized* spirit of the great chancellor and martyr of Henry VIII, Sir Thomas More, whose sepulchre “had op’d his ponderous and marble jaws to cast him up again.” One morning whilst the laureate was engaged reading in his study at Keswick, he was startled by seeing an elderly, dignified-looking gentleman unceremoniously enter his *sanctum*. Supposing him to be an American upon a tour of inspection or diversion, Mr. Southey embraced the opportunity of putting his visitor at ease by expressing his great admiration for that country and people. The visitor, however, disclaimed any connection whatever with the New World, and

informed him that he was a *spirit*, in confirmation of which assertion, and as a tacit reproach to the apparent incredulity of the poet, he held up his hand, which was perfectly transparent, possessing evidently neither weight nor substance. In addition to this proof, he shows his host, who is white and trembling with terror before this phantom, who may be, for aught he knows, the bearer of “airs from heaven or blasts from hell,” a red streak around his neck, which was still “brighter than a ruby.”

In one of the subsequent discussions which were supposed to be held at different intervals between the two, according to the compact made between flesh and spirit, Sir Thomas made the following assertion: “Nothing is more certain than that religion is the basis upon which civil government rests. From religion power derives its authority, laws their efficacy, and both their zeal and sanction.”

Upon the appearance of this work, Mr. Macaulay, then the corypheus of critics, paid Mr. Southey

the compliment of a lengthy although a rather disparaging criticism in the *Edinburgh Review*. He rejects the above text, assuming, however, that the idea of Sir Thomas was that of sectarianism rather than the general principles and influences of a Christian belief, and accordingly gathers a mass of testimony of various inconsistencies among Christian nations that are calculated to subvert that theory. In corroboration thereof he cites the number and varieties of governments that have existed and prospered in every corner of the world, irrespective and independent of revealed religion. He further maintains that the moral and political standard, under the influence of the ancient theogony, was as prolific of wise laws and beneficial results as was subsequently obtained by the autonomy of Christianized governments. This assertion naturally suggests the comparative purity, endurance, and polity of Christian and pagan nations. If in this side of the argument the pantheistic idea of material prosperity and wealth are given the first rank, great credit may then undoubtedly be accorded the ancient dynasties. But when a comparison of the more essential forms, those which constitute the psychological life of a nation, which lend honor to her laws, and bestow dignity and a lofty moral and social standard upon her people, certainly one so familiar with the history of nations only wastes breath upon a paradox in striving to prove their equality.

It was the need of the primeval law of order, of that consistent, self-sustaining element which is the basis of infallible religion, that created the habit of pandering to the undisciplined passions of the Greeks, Romans, and Syrians, as essential to the safety of the state. When we reflect upon the degrading influences wrought upon the people through their most cherished pleasures, such as existed in the brutal

gladiatorial combats; the wild license of the Olympic games; the nameless orgies of the Saturnalia; the sensuous and degrading privileges, under the name and sanction of religion, that were accorded the votaries of the temples of Venus in Greece and Rome, and of Daphne in Antioch, who can for a moment question the depravity, that as a natural sequence, must inevitably have poisoned the social life of the people? Polytheism was rife in various devices of enchanting her pupils. The magnificence of her temples; the grace and beauty of her vestals; the grand conceptions and expression of her artists; the magic and mysterious voice of her oracles and divinations; the splendor and pomp of her religious festivals,—all were calculated to bind the minds of those emotional natures in thralldom. In addition to this moral poison that permeated the state, the political system was worked and sustained upon a basis equally pernicious.

These effects were manifested in the despotic power of one man, the emperor, under whose flaming sword and iron-pronged flail millions of human beings bent in subjection and anguish. Add to this the oppression of the masses at the expense of the few who were favored by the accidents of fortune, as instanced in the political and social privileges of the patricians over the plebeians; the partisan feuds ever disturbing the social fabric; the incessant warfare, with its attendant Nemesis of pillage, destruction, and rapine; surely such anarchy, such depravity should be sufficient to prove the beneficent results that followed the ambient light of Christianity as it dawned upon these lands of demoniacal supremacy.

If we except the few disciples of Pythagoras, Plato, and Socrates, whose lives were a psychical struggle, a dumb cry for some high *logos* that might transport them beyond the prevailing sensuousness which surrounded them, beyond these we

find the most gifted statesmen, the bravest soldiers utterly devoid of balance, and sunk in the lowest superstitions. Totally ignoring the God-gift of their own reason and intelligence, they had recourse to the senseless auguries that were deduced from the entrails of a dumb brute, or uttered from the cavernous depths of some mysterious Dodona grove. At the period when Constantine ascended the throne of the Cæsars, Greece and Rome had declined into a barbarous despotism; the virility of the nation was dead, and the people had sunk into utter demoralization. It was at this juncture that the shadow of the Cross illumined the land, and penetrated the hearts of the lowly and abject. The tolerance subsequently accorded to the new sect Gibbon attributes to the emperor's appreciation of their superior purity of life, their obedience under subordination, and their heroic self-abnegation under oppression and insult. He hoped that the example of the Christians would serve to reform the base habits and degrading pastimes of the masses, and aid him thereby to establish his empire upon a firmer and safer basis. The revivifying effect of religion was as marvellous as it was overpowering.

Even the emperors who persecuted so ruthlessly the new sect were forced to admit the elevated morality, the patient submission, and superior intelligence with which the followers of the strange faith seemed suddenly endowed. That anomalous character, the apostate Julian, even after throwing off the mask of Christianity (which he had only worn for the sake of policy), and returned to the worship and sacrifices of the Pagan deities, was frequently compelled to express his admiration of the sublime virtues that were practiced by the followers of the despised "Galilean." He soon likewise learned, when the aggrandizement of his empire concerned him most, that he could never count upon the venality

of those troops who had knelt and fought under the folds of the sacred *labarum* of his uncle Constantine. This brief résumé conclusively shows that whatever argument may be urged as to the failure of those governments whose polity has been formed under the auspices of Christian attributes, they have been proved to be infinitely more exalted, more stable, and more humane than their Pagan prototypes. Of course this view of the subject dates from the era of general civilization, and is not designed to include that barbaric period which kept Europe in a state of anarchical convulsion by the invasion of the Hun, Goth, and Vandal hordes. True, it may be urged that Christian governments, subsequent to that remote era, have likewise proved degenerate; have emulated the vices and perpetrated the cruelties of their Pagan predecessors. They too have been exalted under the magnificence of a wide expanse of prosperity, which seemed limitless in resources until the inevitable outgoing tide warned them of approaching decay.

But unlike their great prototypes, utter ruin and destruction have never overtaken or consumed those nations who base their claim upon the protective and guiding power of a Supreme Ruler. Their decadence has been more in material resources, arising from adverse circumstances, rather than in the decay of that vital spirit which will ever defy annihilation. Neither Spain, Italy or France possess now the force or integral greatness that distinguished them as paramount among nations two hundred years ago. Yet they are still powers respected and revered, and forever removed from that abysmal darkness that must inevitably settle upon a people that lives in defiance of all religious beliefs and restraints.

A spirit that inspires a nation with ambition for advancement in those paths that will secure the stability of a wise government, and the elevation of her people to a lofty standard in

religion and intellectual acquirements, will undoubtedly realize a rich fruition. But when the race for supremacy assumes the one idea of progress, of liberty, as now with the present ages and our own people, then may we tremble for the result. In this, as in all else, there are degrees. Progress may lead by a tedious, thorny pathway to heaven, or it may carry us, with one fell swoop, as it did Lucifer, down to hell. We are blind to the guiding star in the East that points to the safer though more circuitous way, but like a frenzied steed we rush furiously on, our only aim being to reach the coveted goal, regardless of the beautiful wayside flowers that are ruthlessly crushed in the passing. The Jeffersonian theory, that error should be promulgated by the side of truth, has been adopted as a safe rule. Undoubtedly a great weight may rest securely upon the *might* of truth, but it should also be remembered that evil wields even a more prolific power, for the taint of original sin is ever combating for the mastery; the angel and the demon wrestling to the end of time. If the utilitarian, practical, and prosaic form the constituent elements of progress, if mechanical skill, intellectual activity, and scientific research constitute the basis upon which the future immortality of a nation's renown must rest, then indeed may we lay claim to a share of the victor's prize. In their proper sphere and application this form of progress is advisable, but when the material absorbs or ignores the spiritual, when the intellectual claims a right to analyze even the dread majesty of the Almighty, then we may well tremble for the future of such a people. In religious, social, and political evils there is a contagion as insidious and manifest as in disease. The malaria is in the moral atmosphere, and though for a time there may be no visible symptom of positive danger, yet all, more or less, come under the influence of the taint.

If there were not abundant proofs of this law in the history of fallen dynasties, the present political demoralization, the cancerous *isms*, the golden calf worship of the day, with its accompanying extravagancies, and disregard of the very first principles of honesty (that would shame a savage tribe), are enormities that furnish proof enough of our moral and political retrogression. The security of a nation's grandeur lies not so much in its intellectual advancement as in the purity and exaltation of its social life. If policy and expediency, wealth, territory, or bravery and success in war are to be the standard of renown, the glory will be as ephemeral and evanescent as the trail of a meteor across the sky. Yet it is this very greed of power and wealth, this Laocoon, that is steadily advancing upon us, while every sign of the safe road, every quality of home life and heart culture are being insidiously wound and strangled in the fatal, poisonous coil. Onward, onward, is now the countersign, no matter what treasures of faith and love are crushed in the march. Yet falling back and taking to heart some of the lessons of the past might yield both aid and profit. We sneer at the dark ages, when, alas! the darkness is deeper with us in many things than with our feudal ancestors.

If progress in warfare consists in the numbers of human beings that can be hurled into eternity at one fell blow, or be spared to drag out a life that excites the pity of angels and of men, then indeed may we claim superiority over those steel-clad warriors of the Crusades, who deemed a single hand-to-hand combat the greater honor. Persistent and violent as was the warfare of the feudal day, yet under the cuirass of those historic knights beat hearts that could be moved both by the ordinances of religion and humanity. The "Truce of God"* once proclaimed, the uplifted arm fell power-

* See Balmes.

less, and the victim of even a just revenge was saved for repentance. The houses of God then proved a sanctuary for their inmates that not even king or emperor dared violate. Even the bitterest demagogue must be willing to admit that a little less license in crime, and a higher appreciation of a neighbor's rights in life and property, would prove a great advantage even to the boasted higher progress of the nineteenth century.

Hospitals, almshouses, and charitable asylums were never so numerous, and yet the streets of our large cities are thronged with the hungry and half clothed, and many homeless beings die by the wayside, aye, and even in the streets. Abundance and want, misery and contentment meet at every turn. In the good old times the suffering poor always knew where to find shelter and aid, for convent and monastery doors required neither rubicund committees or poor law regulations to bid open. The poor were regarded like unto the prophet upon whom the mantle of the Lord had fallen, and the sacred injunction, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord," held a literal as well as figurative significance that transformed every beggar into a possible heavenly visitant in disguise. The unknown wanderer with whom St. Martin of Tours shared his cloak, the secret alms of Elizabeth of Hungary changed upon discovery into myriads of lovely roses, while the granaries were miraculously replenished whenever she drew upon the limited store for the wants of her poor,—these are instances that kept alive the hope in every fainting heart, that every generous sacrifice might meet with a similar reward.

In our progressive march we act like children with a pack of cards, building and destroying with equal rapidity. What suits the taste of to-day must be removed to-morrow, because a different fancy tops the wave. And yet with all our brick-and-

mortar mania never can we leave such an inheritance of glory as still glitters upon the spires, shines through the blazoned windows, and carries its dim, sacred light through the lofty arches of the grand cathedrals of the olden time. Our work must be done in a day, for man's realization and enjoyment; their work was a question not of time, but of eternity; not for man, but for God. For his eye alone "genius hung in the dim air the stone arches of those cathedral naves, in which, rising gallery above gallery in height and varied range, and seeming to bridge the interval between earth and heaven, stand in the highest clerestory in radiant robes, against the light, prophets, and saints, and martyrs, and apostles beckoning us upward to their glittering homes."* When age or disease palsied one hand essential to the progress of the work, another took up the fallen implement, and thus for two and three hundred years this labor of love and patience, in the perfection of the beautiful, went on. We talk and write of art culture, and really feel great interest in its development. Schools and unions of art, and collections in private houses and galleries have largely increased of late years, but our progress, in its approach to the great masters, has been but like the labor of Sisyphus. We can never scale the mountain heights and sit side by side with those giants of old. The art-creative faculty is not with us, nor with the age, and no amount of theoretical rules can make future works equal in conception or execution to their great prototypes. The divine afflatus, the sublime motive, the inspired faith essential to such success are not with us, and every statute of our law of progress only widens the gulf that separates us from the emotional and imaginative spirit that made the thirteenth to the sixteenth century

* *Art Scenery and Philosophy in Europe*, W. T. Wallace.

effulgent with paintings, sculpture, and architectural beauties that pale our vapid pretensions into utter insignificance.

Many of the modern ideas that rank in the army of that much-abused word, progress, produce mainly the effect of a mephitic vapor upon those cardinal points in religion, philosophy, and science, that in former ages, although open to discussion, yet ever maintained a safe equilibrium. But because these innovations bear the stamp of novelty, the most absurd, blasphemous, and untenable theories are hailed with delight, and nursed into bantlings of hideous deformity for a wiser generation to destroy. If we could believe that the amorphous vanities of Darwinism, or the blasphemous tenets of Positivism, were destined to blossom into a faith for future generations, we might despair of any power to save from dire destruction; yet the signs of the day are portentous of even greater evils, through the baleful emulation of that pantheistic spirit, which rising like a demon of wrath in Germany, now threatens to bridge the world. Many years ago, that brilliant prodigal, poet, and essayist, Heinrich Heine, in deploring the connection of State and Church in Germany, made the following prediction: "An indifferentism in religion would be, perhaps, the only thing that could save us, and *by becoming weak in faith, Germany might grow politically strong.*" Bismarck is now trying this experiment, and the result promises already an adverse solution; but the end is not yet, and were it not for the conservative element of Catholicism, the world would be in danger of drifting into even a wilder and deeper vortex than now threatens us. Ever since Protestantism chose for her watchword "Progress," and allied it with agitation, she lost the helm and compass that might have aided her to guide or check the wild havoc that thus became the legitimate fruit of

the Reformation. In this wake follows that wanton destruction of the rarest libraries, the noblest works of art, the pillage of magnificent churches and monasteries, that were hallowed by the holiest associations of centuries, thereby stamping with worse than vandal barbarism its proudly boasted mission of liberty and progress. Schlegel in his *Philosophy of History*, vol. ii, when speaking of that epoch of the Reformation which he designates as the *barbaropolemic*, says: "When we hear the middle ages called barbarous, we should remember that that epithet applies with far greater force to the truly barbarous era of the Reformation, and of the religious wars which that event produced."

Although it is the fashion to attribute to the Reformation all subsequent progress in literature and all educational advantages, yet a comparison may safely be risked of those schools that in the higher branches made Hypatia in the fifth century, without a rival in the nineteenth, that rendered Mary, Queen of Scots, Elizabeth of England, and Mary Tudor, models of elegant diction in the Latin, English, and French languages, and that lent such a charm to the learning and genius of Victoria Colonna, as to give inspiration to the chisel as well as to the pen of Michael Angelo. Whatever learning distinguished the early reformers, they owed exclusively to their Catholic education. Under the shadow of every cathedral spire or monastic cell, could schools be found for the education of the masses. Both Popes and Councils, from the earliest ages, had enforced the custom as a law. But the intemperate fanaticism of the early adherents of the Reformation condemned all classical literature as heathenish, deeming only polemical studies and discussions of paramount importance. Speaking of Luther's indifference to the interests of literature, Hallam says: "It is probable that both the principles of this great

founder of the Reformation, and the natural tendency of so intense an application to theological controversy, checked for a time the progress of philological and philosophical literature on this side the Alps."*

The testimony of Erasmus, ten years after that event, is even more conclusive: "Wherever Lutherism reigns there literature utterly perishes." And in another letter of about the same period, he says: "I dislike those gospellers on many accounts, but chiefly because through their agency literature everywhere languishes, disappears, lies drooping and perishes, and yet without learning what is man's life? They love good cheer, and a wife; for other things they care not a straw." The destruction of the celebrated library of Alexandria, by the Caliph Omar in A. D. 632, might be excused upon the plea of ignorance and the rapine of war. But what excuse can be alleged for that offshoot of the Reformation, the Anabaptists, who spread such fearful desolation, and perpetrated such horrors in the persecution of the people and the devastation of churches in the city of Munster? Deciding, in their frenzied fanaticism, that the only book essential to posterity was the Bible, they accordingly gave over to utter destruction the magnificent library of Rudolph Langius, that contained the rarest MSS. and classical works then in existence. Omar made the the same plea, and a similar holocaust in favor of the Koran.

It may be well, and not out of place here, to refresh the memories of those who are always hurling the epithets of "ignorance and darkness" at antecedent ages, to remind them that the invention of nearly all the most beautiful adjuncts to art, as well as the most essential in aid of science, literature, and general learning, belong to a period prior to the Reformation. To that we owe the

mariner's compass, the microscope, the telescope, thermometer and barometer; gunpowder, and the art of printing also belong to that period; while such wonders as the magnificent clock of Strasburg Cathedral, watches, and the stained glass that still pervades the old minsters with hallowed light, and which has long been lost to us, are a part of the same record. Even we must forego our pride in Fulton, and the Hudson River her claim, in favor of "Blasco de Garay, a Spaniard, who made the first successful experiment in steam navigation, in the harbor of Barcelona, in the year 1543; eighty years later Brancas followed up the discovery in Italy."* We might continue the list *ad infinitum*, which would embrace every department, but space forbids. In the face of these historical facts, and by a happy adjustment and appropriation, these old discoveries are used to swell and designate the claim of progress by the advocates of the Reformation.

Among all labor-saving inventions, in either past or present, machinery undoubtedly holds the first rank. But its benefits in manufactories has been widely questioned and decided by many to be adverse to the best interests, morally and physically, of the people. England has gained immensely in wealth and commercial status by this phase of iron progress; but how stands the count with the poor workers, whose bodies become maimed or dwarfed, and whose minds are steeped in darkness, whose souls are void of love and hope? Admitting all the benefits and wonders accomplished by these modern inventions, yet even here a comparison may be risked between the work of this leviathan and the Gobelin tapestries, the silks, velvets, linen and woollen fabrics of centuries ago. In quantity and variety, we may claim superiority, but in elegance and

* Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries.

* A Year in Spain. By an American Protestant, Vol. i, p. 47. Quoted from History of the Reformation by Bishop Spalding.

durability the past must take the prize. Mr. Macaulay, in making a similar summary and comparison, says: "In Florence, in the fourteenth century, without the aid of modern machinery, two hundred factories were engaged in the manufacture of woollen goods alone, and employed thirty thousand workmen." When we recall the gorgeous apparel of royalty and the nobility in those days, together with the magnificent fabrics used in the churches, we can form some idea of the number of looms and hands that were necessary to supply the demand, and the result was something better and brighter than the little pinched white faces and soulless, rayless lives that darken the factory towns of England now. In closing this brief summary of comparative progress between the old and the new, we will give one who can never be accused of partiality for Catholic countries the benefit of the last word. In one of his miscellaneous articles, Mr. Macaulay says: "We doubt whether any country of Europe, our own, perhaps, excepted, has at the present time reached so high a point of wealth and civilization as some parts of Italy had attained *four hundred years ago*."

There is no people on the face of the globe that is so blatant and complacent in their meed of progress as our own. But if we have some cause for vainglory in the past, when genuine patriotism and integrity distinguished our rulers, and the masses regarded industry and frugality as virtues worthy of cultivation, what can be said now of the degeneracy that stamps us to-day abroad as a nation who has proved derelict in promise, aim, and execution? A nation steeped in such a degree of moral turpitude as may well shatter the faith of the world in the glorious prerogatives of a republican form of government. And now, just as the culminating splendor of a century's sun stands poised to crown the favored child of the new world, lo, a cloud

ominous of decadence obscures the disk.

To the system of godless education, with the unrestrained habits and undisciplined morals of our youth, belongs the responsibility of the political corruption and social demoralization that now like a upas tree poisons the entire land. It is this canker that has made our social system one of vapid pretension, extravagant habits, and ostentatious display; which has introduced contempt of all proper economy, and instigated a spirit of rivalry among the poorer and lower classes, to emulate the wealthy, to the detriment of all religious and moral principle. To this taint, also, may be ascribed that want of an elevated independence which sinks all individuality in such a stereotyped form of ideas and patterns, that each man and woman seems only the same work, issued from different presses, and bound in a variety of shapes and colors. These are the seeds that are fructifying for us, as they did for ancient dynasties, ruin and decay. Diogenes would find his search far more difficult now, even with the aid of the brilliant lights that make effulgent the nineteenth century, than when he groped with dim lantern in hand for the one honest man.

We have no more picturesqueness in our characteristics of dress than we possess in our architecture and educational system. There is but one pattern for each department, and brave is the man, and defiant the woman, who dares strike out a new path. The desire for novelty and excitement also have become an epidemic, the force of which is fast destroying the barriers that make home the sanctuary, around which gather all the graces. Our perceptions of the sacredness of private life are rapidly yielding to that inquisitive spirit, that greed of publicity, which with desecrating hands splits the veil of the temple, and bares to the eyes of the curious its

most sacred mysteries. In former days every heart was bounded by a sanctuary railing that no rude hand dared cross. Even yet, in other countries, there are private feelings that are guarded at the home-circle as religiously as were the Lares and Penates of the ancients. Marriage was then the solemn sacrament of youth, and love the chrism that consecrated the bond. Now, however, with us these great epochs of life are reduced to a mere question of pelf and barter, a deliberate business scheme, the most serious considerations of which involve an establishment, a certain amount of jewels, so many yards of lace, and a European tour, transactions wherein money and display command a premium, and hearts and happiness fall below par. The bride of the good old times had her rampart of loving hearts, and a body guard of well-tried friends to shield her from the gaze of a promiscuous crowd, but the bride of to-day glories in drawing a larger church audience than Spurgeon or Beecher.

The old Mosaic law of mourning for the dead would be utterly ignored in this age, which argues grief as contrary to the teachings of both philosophy and religion. Death is now viewed as one of those inevitable calamities which must be met and endured very much in the same degree as any material loss; "it is gone, therefore of what use is grieving?" The sacredness of sorrow finds few disciples, and yet suffering and grief are the only divine right. They are the crown of our inheritance, descending to us from the consecrated brow of the man of sorrows, God Himself. Through this crucible percolates the pure ore that refines the grossness of nature, and aids us to comprehend and grasp the true meaning and aim of life.

A large portion of our degeneracy is mainly due to the all-absorbing idea of material prosperity as the gauge of progress, at the sacrifice of

that which alone belongs to the *years eternal*. Knowledge, with her attendant muses and graces, is undoubtedly a legitimate stepping-stone in the race, but learning alone has never succeeded in repressing crime. The most violent wars, the very refinement of cruelty have been perpetrated, and the lowest vices practiced habitually by the most enlightened men. Greece and Rome had attained the highest acme of culture and civilization, when her people sank to the lowest degree of cruelty and sensualism. It is virtue alone, panoplied in religion, that can lead a nation to the higher and most permanent development. Ignorance is always to be deplored, but corruption must be shunned as a pestilence, for it gangrenes the very soul of a nation. For ignorance there is always a remedy, and like a single combatant in the arena, may be vanquished. But corruption in a people duplicates like the Gorgon's head, and defies annihilation. To expand the heart, awaken the affections, and rouse into action the dormant attributes of faith and repentance, constitutes the first lesson of the child while it is still in the mother's arms. These alone, combined with true religious instruction, may germinate into the loftiest qualities that can ennoble the man. Look at the giant heroes of old, the knights *sans peur et sans reproche*. To live purely, to fight bravely, to be leal to their God, country, and king, and loyal to the weak and oppressed, to profess their faith earnestly, and meet death unflinchingly, these were the studies that filled the measure of education and progress to them. Is there to be found, even now, any one in this age of superior enlightenment, to condemn those grand old Titans, those "braves" who stand upon the crumbling ramparts of the heroic ages, glittering and bright, like unto the hilt of Excalibar, to the eyes of Sir Bedivere, when with trembling hands, at the bidding of

his dying master, he threw it into the "mystic mere?"

But we have a far higher exemplification of the power that may be gained and the good that may be wrought without the adjuncts of intellectual culture, in the choice made by Infinite Wisdom itself, of unlettered, unpolished men, to dispense the true light throughout the world. Thus, "*The foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible hath God chosen; and things that are not, that he might bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his sight.*" (1 Corinthians I : 26.)

Whilst we are lying back so complacently upon our oars, drifting jubilantly down this silvery wave of progress, it might be safe to scan the pages of the past, and look at the reverse side of the medal which bears the motto, "So far shalt thou go and no farther;" profitable to remember that retrogression and decay are likewise stamped upon all things under the sun. Look at the once glorious Orient, with all the hoarded treasures of the primeval dynasties. Recall those stately cities, the vast extent of territory, and the countless hosts that made the empire of Semiramis, of the Ptolemies, the marvel of centuries. Behold now, in lieu thereof, her broken columns, her dismantled temples, the still massive débris of her once invulnerable walls, with Memnon sitting solitary amid the ruins, chanting in low diapason their eternal requiem. Consider next the present skeleton of glorious Greece, the land from whence emanated "all the triumphs of truth and genius over prejudice and power," the land from whence has floated to us all that can inspire the intellect, teach the loftiest patriotism, and bring "gladness to eyes

which fail with wakefulness and tears, and ache for the dark house and the long sleep." Yet "her freedom and her power have for more than twenty centuries been annihilated; her people have degenerated into timid slaves, her language into a barbarous jargon, and her temples have been given up to the successive depredations of Romans, Turks, and Scotchmen."*

And so as each new dynasty rose into power and saw her day culminate into glory, some unforeseen catastrophe, like unto the writing upon the wall, pointed with prophetic finger to the pending stroke of doom. Some wandering horde of barbarians, like the Scythian and Mede to the East, the Macedonian to Greece, the Huns and Vandals to Italy, the Goth to France, and the Norsemen to Britain, were respectively chosen as the instruments to lay in the dust the vainglory and arrogance that walk in the van of conquest.

Not that we should relinquish the struggle. The march must be ever onward; there must be no vacuum, for God is glorified as man elaborates and beautifies the model he has given in his own works. It is the prerogative of time never to pause until the last leaf of the record is filled, the final harvest gathered. Time claims in his mutability this ceaseless motion, but man claims immortality, and only by the downward slope of the grave can he reach the highest exaltation. When the stone is rolled away, and the door of the sepulchre stands opened to the light, then only will that *progress*, which can never be marred by retrogression or decay, be fully attained. Hence the sole search that can truly compensate our labor is for the key that will open to us the mysterious treasures of the immutable. "But only one thing is necessary. Come and follow me."

* Macaulay's Miscellaneous Writings.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES.

THIS blessed Christmas morn, the winds
Are blowing sad and cold :
The dusky shades are sleeping still
Upon the frosty wold !
The pale blue light of yonder stars
Falls dimly o'er the wave,
Whose trembling voice a requiem breathes
Above the sailor's grave.

This blessed Christmas morn, the bells
Fling out their music wild ;
They make me dream of olden days
When I was but a child,
And heard their solemn voices wake
The still, cold morning air,
As strayed I towards the village church
To chant the midnight prayer.

This blessed Christmas morn, the light
Breaks in the shady sky ;
And angel voices sweet and low,
Pour out their song on high ;
While up from many an altar shrine,
There swells the gladsome hymn :
Religion's light is burning bright,
It never waxes dim.

This blessed Christmas morn, the poor
Are gathered round their God ;
His voice speaks from his manger-home
To bless the path they've trod.
That voice will cheer the pilgrim's heart,
As shrineward slow it bends ;
Those eyes will light the pilgrim's soul,
As heavenward it tends.

This blessed Christmas morn has dawned
On many an erring child,
And light that streams from bygone days,
Has on his pathway smiled ;
And turning towards that church-bell voice,
His heart grows light once more ;
Like shipwrecked hearts, which some bright wave
Has cast upon the shore.

This blessed Christmas morn will shine
On many a grassy cell,

Where kindred hearts sleep cold and still,
 Who loved the Christmas well—
 Who loved to hear the village bells
 Send forth their chiming song
 Upon the breeze that swept the sea
 And bore their voice along.

A blessed, blessed Christmas morn
 Will dawn on us some day ;
 And hearts that now are light and glad,
 Shall then have turned to clay :
 Then solemn bells shall fling their notes,
 The morning winds blow cold,
 Above the grave, whose clasped hand
 Our mould'ring dust shall hold !

* * * * *

This blessed, happy, Christmas night,
 The stars look lone and pale,
 The whisp'ring breeze blows sad, and cold,
 Along the winding vale.
 The screaming heron wings her flight,
 To sleep upon the waves ;
 Where oft the silent lighthouse throws
 The beam that guides and saves.

This blessed, happy, Christmas night,
 My young heart homeward veers ;
 For, circled round our Irish hearth,
 Are friends of boyhood's years !
 And one fond voice, that lingers near
 Where'er my footsteps stray,
 Breathes forth a wish that I were there,
 To dream the hours away !

This blessed Christmas night, they speak
 Of many a mem'ried scene ;
 Ere childhood's bloom had died away,
 When life was fresh and green :
 The lovely fields that skirt the shore,
 Where ev'ning's last ray fell—
 The cool, long shades, the clifted rocks
 Which childhood loves so well !

This blessed Christmas night, they breathe
 Full many a storied lay,
 Of many a dark old castle home
 Fast falling to decay :
 Of many a mountain path and cave,
 Where fled the faithful band,
 Who sought to keep religion's light
 Still burning in our land.

This blessed Christmas night, a voice,
 A priestly voice is there,
 That speaks of many an ivied wall,
 Where woke the matin prayer,
 Ere yet the spoiler's hand had come,
 Ere yet the shadows came,
 And slept for many a wearied year
 Where gleamed that sacred flame.

This blessed, happy Christmas night
 Will wile me from my books,
 And wing me o'er the ocean's breast,
 To kinder, friendlier looks—
 Will wing me towards my boyhood's home,
 The Slaney's wave beside,
 Where oft the spring-voiced birds have lisped
 The music of its tide !

This blessed, happy Christmas night,
 My mem'ry steals in dream,
 To where the turf on yon old hearth
 Throws out its dusty beam :
 For the light of many a faded year,
 And many a day that's gone,
 Shines in the cheerful fire that burns
 Upon the old hearth-stone !

A VOW'S FULFILMENT.

LATE one summer afternoon, when the sun was drawing toward the sea, a man of grave and holy countenance, and clad in peculiar garb, came slowly down a mountain-path which led to a seaside town of Southern Italy. In his hand he held a breviary, and he was reading as he walked, but he failed not to notice every wayside cross, and to pause awhile to pray beside it; then he went onward steadily as if refreshed in soul and body. Presently he came near a shrine of the Madonna, and his attention was arrested by the sight of a woman kneeling there absorbed in devotion, her whole aspect revealing it to be the devotion of one in excessive anguish. She was evidently of the upper class of peasantry, and showed signs of un-

usual refinement, but her dress was disordered, and her black hair fell in tangled masses about a face singularly beautiful but almost livid in its pallor. She was kneeling upright, her head thrown back, her arms uplifted to their full extent, the fingers clasped convulsively together.

"Madonna, Madonna," he heard her say as he came nearer, "Mother of my God, do you hear me, do you see me? Give me my boy again. Do you not sit there with your Jesus on your knee? Give me *my* boy to hold. Give me *my* boy. Why will you break my heart, Madonna?"

Wild as were the words and the appearance, something in the tone touched the priest's inmost soul with a sense that he was looking upon no case of rebellious despair, but of

holiness subjected to uncommon trial, that it might rise thereby to nobler heights of perfection. He closed and put away his book, knelt for a brief space in prayer, then spoke aloud :

"Does not the Madonna answer you, my daughter?"

The woman turned to him with an expression of mingled relief and surprise, which told plainly that her sufferings had been misunderstood by those around her, and that the stranger had found the entrance to her grief.

"Father, she heeds me not," she said. "Ah, more, father. Long ago I prayed to her, many and many a prayer by night, by day—holy prayers in the love of her sweet Jesus, and they are lost, lost, lost."

"Nay, daughter, not lost. No prayer is ever lost if it is a holy prayer in Jesus' love. Tell me about it, and we will pray to our Lady then together."

He sat down on a fallen tree beside the shrine, she knelt before it still. "May God reward you!" she cried. "They tire of it down below there, and the Padre says ever, 'Be patient, do God's will,' and he does not understand."

The priest smiled sadly. "Nay, nay," he said, "think not so. He understands all that you need to have him understand. God's will is always best. Be patient and you will know some day."

"Shall I know!" she cried out, not angrily, but as a pent-up stream must have its way. "Sooner will the sea give back our buried sailors, and the churchyard graves fly open, and our dead come forth to love us here again, than I shall see my heart's prayer answered. Sooner shall the sun that's setting turn back to noon and the Madonna there stoop down to bless me."

"God could do all that, and more, if he so willed," was the calm reply. "Believe me, there is no sweeter thing on earth, no dearer

gift, than to know and do the perfect will of God. Pain and loss and heartache are made thereby our blessing."

"Not this," she moaned, "not this. Madonna, make him understand. Pitiful Jesu, make him understand."

"They surely will," the priest said compassionately. "I believe they surely will. Speak freely, poor soul, and may God give you grace."

Once more she lifted her arms to their full extent. "Are the skies blue," she said, "and the leaves fresh and green, and do the birds still sing, and does the whole wide earth look gay? It seems to me that years have gone, sullen and slow, sullen and slow, since that one awful hour; but I mind me that the new moon hung like a little silver bow above the sea that night, and last night it was only full. Two weeks that are like years! My boy; my darling, my only one."

"Was it then that your son died?" the stranger asked.

"No son, no son. Dearer than that. My father, listen. We were but two, my sister Beatrice and I. Father and mother both were dead; we had no brother to protect us; we lived alone beside the sea, and made the fishers' nets, and spun the fishers' garments; we went to church together, side by side; we woke and worked, we prayed and slept. In an evil hour she met a gypsy with his bold dark face and witching way; he loved her and he won her love, no words but his could move her. They were wedded, and he bore her off to his wild camp high up among these peaks. It was no place for Christian maids; I could not go there; what could I do but pray? By night, by day, spinning and walking, helping to draw the nets to land and to sort the fish, hours upon hours in church before the Sacred Heart, hours upon hours at night on the cold floor before the crucifix, down on my face among the stones,

and in the dust by every shrine I passed, 'Save thou that soul,' I prayed.

"God answered me. At Easter, pale and sad, she came down humbly to the church, was shriven, and once more side by side we knelt to receive the Blessed Sacrament. Then she went back again, and ten days later one came with haste to bid me go to her, for her babe was born, and she was dying. Did I weep or moan as now? My father, while I sped along the steep ascent, following my little gypsy guide, I laughed and sang and gave God thanks. For the Padre was gone before us, bearing our Lord to strengthen her, and my sister, my Beatrice, was dying in his love, and going to him, and no one could ever hurt her soul again.

"There she lay in a rough, rude tent; men and women far more rough and rude were standing round her awestruck. The Padre had already heard her make confession. I knelt by her and saw the sore contrition on her face; I saw her made strong with the viaticum and anointed with the sacred oil; I saw and she saw her child made God's child ere she died. When it was signed with the holy sign, and lay all white and holy in my arms, she beckoned me to come close to her. 'Promise me,' she whispered, and the dew of death were on her lips, and her breath struck chill against my face, 'promise me. Not like his father—never let him be like his father. Keep him good and pure.'

"Then I knelt down by her and looked straight into her dying eyes. 'At God's judgment-seat,' I said, and my voice sounded in my ears like some unknown voice solemn and dread to hear; 'at God's judgment-seat I will give you back this soul, holy and pure as now, God and our Lady helping me.' And suddenly, as one who knows not what he does, I bent me down and pressed my lips to hers where the Holy Host had

lately been. 'By the seven sacraments,' I said, 'and our Lord's seven blood-sheddings, and the seven griefs of our Lady, I will give thee back this soul that awful day, holy and pure as now.'

"'Hear her, my God!' she said, and then she died.

"I watched that night beside her. All night long, around a great camp fire, the gypsy men and women sang and drank and made their hideous incantations, and the shadows danced about me in the lonely tent, and her face shone white and still beside me, and her baby slept upon my knee. The winds blew through the forest trees like funeral music, chanting even my own promise in my ears, 'I will give you back this soul, holy and pure as now, holy and pure as now.' I sang it, too, with solemn gladness beside my dead. Presently the babe stirred on my knee, and then I looked at him. Intent on her till then, I had hardly marked his face. Now by the ghostly light I saw it, and lo! no sign of my Beatrice was on it. Large, dark, and beautiful, with a beauty that one shrank from, he was all his father; and when he opened his eyes, they were great black eyes like those I dreaded most.

"And suddenly I understood what an awful vow I had bound me with forever. The water of baptism was hardly dry upon his brow, and holy and pure as now I had promised to restore him to his mother, this child stamped with the likeness of the worst of men. A great fear fell upon me; still holding her babe, I knelt again beside the mother. 'Jesus, Mary, help me,' I prayed. And then—it was not as if I did it of my own will, some divine thing moved me, God knows what—it was no rash vow, God prompted it, 'By thy seven sacraments,' I cried, 'by thy seven blood-sheddings, by thy Mother's seven griefs, O Jesu, grant me to see this soul holy and pure as now at the awful day, and wholly

and forever I give myself and it to thee, and to thee alone.' Then peace fell upon my soul, and I waited for the dawn.

"I had hoped that they would bring my Beatrice and lay her in consecrated ground, but when day came, her husband utterly refused. She was his, he said. I wept sore, but in my heart was a great rejoicing too. He had no power now to touch her soul, it was safe forever in the hand of God; and her body which he thought was his to do with as he would, God could raise up at the last from the wild mountain gorge to his own holy city in spite of him. I lifted the boy and essayed to go my way. And then he claimed him. God and his angels were with me then. I stood there, a weak woman, before that lawless man; I strained the child to my heart, and I made the sign of the cross before the father and myself. 'In the name of God,' I said, 'leave this child with me and him. Wilt ruin his soul, too?' He drew back with a scared look on his face, and I went straight forth with my darling in my arms. My God! My God!"

The anguish swept over her face again; the priest's lips moved as he saw it, but he spoke to God and not to her; he understood that it was no word from him she needed now, but that the truest comfort he could give her was to let her speak as she would without interruption. She wound her arms into each other and around her, till he who saw her groaned in pity at the sight of such self-inflicted pain, but he knew, too, that it was a real relief for far worse mental torture.

"Madonna," she cried, "where is he now? Do you see that my arms are empty, and my heart is empty, and my vow is broken? Thou who didst lose thy Son three days with no fault of thine, and mourned him sore, *my* boy is lost forever, and forever, and forever. What do you say to that, Madonna?

Yes, father, lost forever. In her own month too, when who so happy as I before her shrine with my flowers and my prayers, and my boy—my boy! It had been a day of brightest sunshine—O sun, that I can never love to see again!—I brought my little Paolo down beside the sea, to wait the coming of the boats. Behind me, as I walked, I heard the women say how fair I was, and how I loved my sister's child; and they wondered what would be if ever I had children of my own to claim my heart. I only smiled, and clasped him closer to me. They knew not of my vow.

"Around the point came the shouts of men calling for help to drag the nets to shore; I laid Paolo on the soft white sand, and ran to help them. It was so short a time that I was gone, the shadow of the rock near which I laid him had hardly moved a man's length on the sand, but when I came again he was no longer there. We sought—the whole town helping—we sought hour by hour in vain. At last a boat put in with haste and fear, and the owner said they had fled home before a foreign bark of pirates, and had seen on board a tall Moor standing in the prow with a dark-haired baby in his arms."

She was not weeping now; the passion had died down in her voice; she spoke in tones of dull despair.

"Can you fancy what it is to have held a child for eight months, night and day, upon your heart; to have loved it as you never loved an earthly thing before; to have needed not, missed not, parent, sister, lover, while you had him? And then to feel the baby hand no longer on your neck; to miss the baby cry and smile; to have your home and your heart empty, empty? Many and many a woman knows that pang, father. I know more. Gone from my heart, and gone from the Sacred Heart as well; gone from our Lady, gone from priest and prayer; gone

where men mock at the holy faith ; gone, with his father's face and eyes and soul, to be made like his father, and to sin and die, in spite of all my prayers and vows. I have no hope ! I have no hope ! My boy is lost forever and forever !”

Up from the village by the sea came the sweet notes of the vesper bell. “Daughter,” the priest said, thoughtfully, “God has sent me to you. I preach in the church to-night. Come there and listen to my words. Till then, farewell, and trust in God. Pray as you used—the very prayers—and make the very vows.”

He blessed her as she knelt beside the shrine, then hastened down the path. The woman lifted face and hands, with a great hope awakening in her heart, and did as he had bidden her, then followed him.

The village church was thronged that night ; sailors were there, and sailors' wives and children, for the strange preacher was to speak of something which appealed strongly to their hearts, living as they did in constant danger from pirates, who infested all that coast. He told them good tidings that fair May evening. He told them of the religious order founded many years previous by command of the Mother of God herself, for redeeming captives from the power of the infidel ; of the great need for such an order ; of the danger of eternal ruin for many baptized souls if none came to rescue them from their temporal slavery. He told of the many men who had joined the order ; of those who prayed, and those who preached, and those who begged for alms ; of some who had given their very selves in exchange for captives, choosing to let their fellow-men go free, and to live as slaves, and die, if need be, in their stead. And looking on the eager faces lifted to his own—faces pale with bitter memories and heart-sore longings, and wet with tears for the loved and lost—he pleaded with

them to give of their goods and of their prayers to ransom their brethren, perhaps their own kith and kin, from Satan's power.

Many gave of gold and silver that night, and many prayed. One soul, listening with bated breath, moaning no longer in despairing pain, heard and heeded the few words which called to a truer self-denial, an entire consecration. One woman, her reason unstrung by grief, but her faith and love strung up to intensest fervor, caught the holy flame from those holy lips, heard Christ call her to leave all and follow him, and obeyed the call as far as she then knew how. “Rome, Rome”—that was what the preacher said, or so at least she understood him—at Rome the work was done. Under that full blazing moon whose tiny bow but two weeks since had witnessed all her loss, Luisa sped along the mountain-path which led north to Rome. How far away it was she never thought or cared ; she would have gone round the whole world as if with winged feet gladly, buoyed by the great hope filling all her heart, that her child would yet be saved. “I shall keep my vow,” she whispered through the night. “Madonna,” she prayed before the moonlit shrines, “Madonna, thou and I will find him yet, and I shall keep my vow.” It never crossed her mind that the preacher meant that she should wait and speak to him ; she had listened as he bade, she had prayed the prayers and vowed the vows again ; her Lord had called her, and why should she delay ?

The priest asked for her, and people sought her that evening, all in vain. “She knows not what she does,” they told him, speaking with pitying tenderness of one who had no need of pity now. They could not understand why the stranger seemed to care so much for her, but he was conscious more and more of some strange prescience that God had meant this woman to be of use

to him and to his order, and now where was she? "If she knows not what she does, God knows," he said. "He can work his work in his own way;" and praying for her, he too set out for Rome. His journey was by sea, with favoring wind and tide; soon he was at home, but no day passed without a prayer, a thought of pity, for her who, one short hour, had come into his life. Pity for her! What though her feet bled, and her whole frame ached, and often hungry and weary, she slept beneath the stars? She was going to find her child; our Lady of Ransom would surely give her back her child; God had him in his holy keeping, waiting, only waiting, for her to come.

When at last Rome burst upon her view, how was she to find, in those crowded streets, the guide she sought? How, but with the same dauntless prayer and patience where-with she had made her way as far as this. One day a priest beheld a woman kneeling at a shrine in one of Rome's great thoroughfares, too wrapped in prayer to notice those who passed, and he paused amazed at seeing his own prayers answered, then chid himself for his little faith.

"I know not how I came," she told him. "God brought me. I drank of the brook and fed on roots, herbs, anything. All the time I prayed my prayer and vowed my vow. Now let me go to save my boy."

Slowly, while she spoke, came back to him the story he had been told by others in her southern home. Who the pirates were whom the boatmen had seen, no one could guess; they differed from those who usually harassed their coasts. It was doubtful if the child was really Luisa's, and even if it were, there had been time to sell him far inland. Moreover, many children were carried off to Africa from time to time; how could she trace her own? But stronger than all such reasoning, though receiving additional weight from it,

was the priest's sense of Luisa's real vocation.

"What do you say is your wish?" he asked at length, his measured tones a strong contrast to her eager, rapid answer.

"I will go at once," she said, "only tell me how. Wherever you bid, alone, without money, without friends, to save my boy; even to sell myself for him as you said that night."

He listened to her with no sign of emotion, but his heart was full of prayer to God, and of thankfulness to him for his work on childlike souls. She who had done so much for the sake of a baby not her own, could do far more for Christ.

"Is this your chief wish?" he asked.

She paused. He was conscious that she was struggling with some interior emotion. "I do not know," she said at last. "I do not know what it means. It is—I must—O let *this* be God's will."

"Suppose," he went on with the same perfect calmness, "suppose God willed to grant your prayer, and to fulfil your vow, but not in your way at all; not by any means which you saw fit and proper? Suppose that he has taken you at your word, and wills that you shall indeed be his wholly, apart from all earthly ties, even that which seemed to you so sacred, and that in some way which perhaps you will never know in this life. He will take care that your child shall serve him thus, given, indeed, with the full meaning of your words, to God, and to God alone? Have you never thought that your vow implied the giving up your child itself for the love of God?"

"And I do nothing, father?"

"Is this, then, nothing?" he asked. "Is it nothing to besiege God night and day with prayers, not for one soul which *you* love, but for all souls whom *he* loves? He has no need of you to love that child. He asks of you your will alone, your

faith, yourself. All else he will have you leave to him. Remember that you vowed to give *everything* for God."

Into a church near by, Luisa went, away from the glare and tumult of the world without, into the shadow and the silence, into the nearness of the marvellous Presence whose Sacred Heart was calling her to Him, and to Him alone. There she was to make her choice; and there at first a flood of memories swept over her, till it seemed for a time as if strength, and will, and life itself must fail. Again she felt the baby hand upon her neck, the baby kiss upon her lips, again the child was lying in her arms, and she was on the beach and in the forest, and climbing the mountain-paths, feeling no weariness or grief while his smile cheered her. And once more fancy painted his present and future lot, sold into a slavery of soul far worse than that of the body, growing up evil, lawless, unbelieving; dying at last an infidel among infidels; meeting her and mocking her before the throne.

A wild fire was blazing in her heart. Miles seemed as nothing, and the sea as solid rock, before her eager faith, and that strange land like some familiar place where all would know her, and she would find her boy at once, or else die joyfully, seeing him forever free. How could she trust her sacred charge to any other, even to God himself? Surely, he willed to use her as his instrument.

So she looked up with all that pain tugging at her heart, rending it, driving her almost mad, and behold, she was quite alone in the silent church, alone with her Lord. She crept nearer to the altar, nearer to the sacred shrine, nearer to the Sacred Heart. On the wall was a great painting, the Lord of all things hanging dead upon a ghastly cross; at its foot the Mother of Sorrows looking intensely at her son.

"Madonna!"

Once more the cry broke forth in all its passionate wildness, but there it stayed. For awhile she did not speak, she was not conscious that she thought, she only gazed steadily, while the silence and the peace wrapped weary frame and tortured soul alike into a deeper rest than sleep could be, and "without noise of words" God the Holy Ghost taught her by his unearthly wisdom.

What was her grief compared to this grief; what was her loss compared to this? Yet grave and firm in all her anguish, that Holy Mother stood there, and made no effort to spare her Son a moment's pain. God's will, not ours, God's will alone be done.

Still she looked upward; some divine voice was calling her, speaking to her inmost soul. This Blessed One, with the wounded and broken Heart, *loved* her, was asking for her love. And overwhelming all else, an answering love awoke within her, a foretaste of deeper rapture yet to be. He could save her boy without her help; all He wanted of her was to plead and to suffer with Him. That was *all*.

Beside or in that quiet church, Luisa had her daily home. Where she slept few knew; often she did not sleep at all, but watched the whole night through, beneath the stars. When the sun shone hottest in the Roman sky, she stood, bare-headed, barefooted, in tattered raiment, begging alms of those who passed, "for the love of our Lady of Ransom." The words were simple, yet people rarely heard them carelessly; something in the tone thrilled one's soul with a sense of more than ordinary want and woe. Three hours each day she begged from men. The rest of her time, she knelt, a beggar, a queen, a royal handmaid, before God. People came to the church for the very purpose of watching her uplifted face in its more than angelic fervor of devotion, and to catch some sparks of such ardent

love. She never knew it. Uniting her heart with the Sacred Heart, and clinging to the Mother of grief, she entered into a mystical and unbroken union with Him who carried our sorrows; she pierced far into the mystery of submission and suffering, whereby the Blessed Virgin became our Lady of Ransom.

Captives returning home, freed from chains and cruel usage, were often told of her, and often came to thank her for her work of prayer and self-denial. She never seemed to comprehend them. But for a time she failed not to ask of each newcomer one eager question: "Hast ever seen in the land of slavery a little dark-haired child of Italy, with great black eyes? He had Our Lady's beads about his neck, carved quaintly from the orange-wood, but I fear the infidel soon took them from him." And when always she could find no satisfaction from their answers, sighing she said, "God's will be done."

But by and by she ceased to ask, she even ceased to care. Literally, she forgot all, she gave up all in the fulfilment of her vow. Her home beside the sea, the love of her child, the thought of that far-off land of the infidel, each alike faded from her. The one thought of her Divine Lord possessed her soul. When at last she lay upon her death-bed the priest who had been the instrument of bringing her to Rome, was the same who guided her through the vale of death to the heavenly city. Watching beside her he thought again of all her suffering, of her long years of work and of waiting. She had grown so holy by their perfecting power that it seemed to him God must grant her at the last, if only in prophetic vision, the fruit of all her labor.

And even as he thought this he saw a look of awe and rapture kindle in her face, and he bent forward eagerly, thinking that God was indeed gracious to her in her hour of death.

He was gracious, but not as Father Jerome thought. "Do you see him?" he asked. "Is Paolo safe? Has God shown him to you?"

She did not answer. She did not hear the name that once had stirred every fibre of her being to dare all for that one beloved soul.

"Paolo?" the priest repeated, longing to gain additional evidence of God's love for this holy soul. "Is it Paolo?"

But she had forgotten earth. The name woke no answering chord within her.

"Daughter," he said earnestly, "in the name of holy obedience what is it that you see?"

And then she who had bent her neck beneath the sweet yoke of the three great vows, but most deeply had entered into the meaning of the subjugation of the will, answered steadily, with the same upward look of awe and rapture on her face, "I see my Lord," and so she died.

The next day a priest, come to Rome from a distant Italian town, saw a great crowd gathered round a church, pressing one upon another, climbing to the windows, besieging the doors.

"What causes this?" he asked of a man standing on the outskirts of the throng, and the man made answer: "A holy woman died last night in the odor of sanctity. We come to honor her, and to gain some blessing from her. If I can but reach to touch her I doubt not that I shall be healed of my malaria that torments me sorely."

"I will lend you a hand, friend," said the stranger kindly. "Perhaps my priestly dress will help us through the crowd."

They made their progress slowly, and so heard much of what the people were saying all around them. Listening, the priest showed signs of wonder and surprise.

"It is reported," one man was saying to his neighbor, "that the Moors carried away her son some

years since,—at all events she lost him,—and she vowed her life to God, in order to save his soul."

"Well did she keep her vow then," was the answer. "God loves and hears such holy ones as she was."

"Whence came she?"

"From the South they say, but none know how. Angels led her the people think, for she had no guide, no money, no friends, no food."

"Her name?"

"Luisa. May the Holy Father one day enrol it with the saints."

"They tell that she died in glory, and the women with her heard angel music, and she saw heavenly sights none else could see."

It was a heavenly sight that the strange priest saw, when at last he reached the bier lying before the high altar. Always strikingly beautiful, the face which had been worn by fast and vigil was soft and fair now like a little child's, and upon the lips the smile still rested which had greeted the vision of her Lord.

At the head of the bier, motionless, absorbed in prayer and thanksgiving, with his eyes fixed upon the saintly face as if thereby he drew each moment nearer to the Lord she saw, an aged priest of the order of our Lady of Ransom was kneeling. Calmly, as if it were by right his place, the stranger knelt at the bier's foot, and undisturbed by all the tumult round him, entered also into deep communion with his God. When word was given for the people to depart, still he knelt there, and at last only they two were left with the dead before the Sacred Heart. Then the stranger spoke low and reverently in the hallowed stillness.

"My brother," and then for the first time Father Jerome saw him. "My brother, you may not remember me, but twenty years ago this very month you preached in my little church beside the sea. This holy woman heard you."

Father Jerome looked at him with

his whole soul in his eyes, as if sure of some great blessing coming with his words.

"She had mourned her sister's child because she thought him forever lost. I bade her wait God's time patiently."

"She learned to do it," Father Jerome said.

"And she kept her vow? Though indeed I need not ask."

"To the utmost; to the end."

"I have travelled far, in my old age, to find her," said the padre. "I baptized her when she was a baby, and I loved her eager, holy soul. I had news to tell her."

Wistfully the other priest bent forward. "Tell *me*," he cried. "Tell me; perhaps she also hears."

"Two weeks since," slowly the aged, reverend voice went on, "some fisher-lads, idling in their boats below the cliffs, found, hidden by vines, a rocky cleft where none of them had ever been before. Mounting to it in foolhardy fashion, yet guided by God's providence, they found there the bleached bones of a little child, and close beside them a quaintly carven rosary. Had there been any doubt, those beads must have proved that we had found Paolo. We knew them well for those Luisa loved the best, and it was I who blessed them. I too it was who had baptized that child, and twenty long years after, stainless as when the dew of baptism were not dry upon his brow, I buried him. Then I came to find you, brother, and to see if you knew aught of her. I am too late, alas!"

Too late! Suddenly an exquisite, unearthly odor, a radiant, unearthly light drew their eyes to that holy face once more. Around the head they saw the saintly halo shine, the whole body was luminous with a mystic glory, and the priest, grown old in heavenly lore, knew well that she who had seen her Lord in death was gazing forever on the beatific vision. What need to tell her that

the soul for whose ransom she had given her all had been spotless and pure with God those twenty years, wholly and forever His, and His alone? What need to tell her now, that while she had served and suffered for its sake on earth, it had served God

painlessly with angelic service face to face with Him? Far better than they knew it she knew all; nor could they grieve that here she had not known it, since through that path of pain and mystery she had been transformed into the likeness of her Lord.

“THE CHRONICLE OF ST. ANTONY OF PADUA.”

GIVE to a man of culture, not a Catholic, certain books of the *Quarterly series* now in process of publication in England—the *Life of St. Jane Frances de Chantal*, for instance—he may take exception to it here and there, but it is easy to suppose that he will be able to find enjoyment in the study which he can make of the character and life of this clear-headed, earnest-minded, womanly woman; she has much with which he can sympathize, much which will win his love, admiration, and respect, even while he coolly condemns her because she carried out that which eternal wisdom and truth justified,—the leaving of father and children, houses and lands, for the love of God. Like a personal friend she stands before us, drawn by a woman’s skilful hand. She and her portrayer are alike Catholics; *ergo*, of course, mistaken; but candid criticism will admit that there is truth and helpfulness in such a book.

Or give this critic the *Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*. Miracles are here, and hints of matters which are foreign to ordinary life and quite suspicious in their nature, but there is a strong counter-balance of more general and harmless topics; the reviewer will tell us that the work is scholarly, historical, moderate; that the letters are well worth reading, to gain an

idea of the practical working of a singular system which, in spite of hatred and scoff and with all the powers of the world arrayed against it, lives and works among us with undaunted will. So, too, the *Life of Donna Luisa de Carvajal* may win a not unkindly notice, if the critic be inclined to candor, and has a taste for hearing both sides of a disputed question; and the simplicity and sweetness of the *Story of St. Stanislaus Kostka* may waken the poetic element of his nature.

But, with the fifteenth volume of the series, the case is different. Notwithstanding touches of exquisite beauty, from first to last there is something here, unavoidable, prominent, even thrust upon our notice, which gives to the *Chronicle of St. Antony of Padua* a tone different from the other books we have named. There is hardly a chapter throughout which does not relate a *miracle*, and, in some, these marvels are told one after the other with hardly a pause to allow one to draw breath and make a sign of amazement; are told too in a calm, matter-of-fact fashion, as if such things were actually true, and all men must credit them as calmly as they are related. You tell us, the critic exclaims, that this saint was a great preacher, the hammer of heretics, but it is little you have to say of his preaching compared with all you tell of his

miracles. This book is a story-book, like the fairy tales we give our children. Do you expect us to believe it all?

Hardly do we open the account of St. Antony's life than we are told, that when he was once caring for a sick man, he was informed by God that the illness was occasioned by the devil. He "immediately laid his habit over the sufferer and he was cured in an instant." From this time on the miracles follow in swift succession. At last we are told, as if it were one of the historical facts we learn at school, like the conquest of England by Julius Cæsar, that, on the evening of St. Antony's death near Padua, as a certain abbot, Don Thomas, was sitting in his room, miles distant from the death-bed, "his old scholar, Antony, came in and said to him, 'See, Father Abbot, I have left my little ass near Padua and am going in haste to my own country;' and so saying, he passed his hand under his chin, caressingly, and cured him of an affection of the throat from which he was suffering. As he disappeared through the door, the abbot hastily followed him to beg him not to be in so great a hurry to depart. But he saw nothing of him, and the persons who were in the antechamber into which Antony had seemed to pass declared that no one had entered it. Don Thomas sent to the monastery of the Friars Minor, inquiring whether he had been there, and when he heard that nothing had been seen of his beloved scholar and friend, he felt sure, of what was soon proved by news from Padua, that Antony had alluded to his mortal remains which he had just left at Arcella, and that paradise, not Portugal, was the country to which he was bound."

Death does not close the list of wonders. Chapters follow, telling of more marvels after death. Is this writer one of us, in full possession of his powers, and in a reason-

able state of mind, that he should expect us to believe so much? Does he believe it himself? Nothing contents him. The very preaching of the saint must be supernatural—we are told that he had the gift of tongues; that men of different speech, listening to him at one and the same time, heard him each in his own language; that, however great the crowd, however loud the tumult, his voice was distinct to all; when men refused to hear him, he bade the fish of the sea attend, and they obeyed, coming towards the shore in shoals, and listening attentively. He was seen in two places at the same instant; he predicted of the future, and his prediction was fulfilled; he read the thoughts of men; he penetrated into the wiles of Satan when other persons saw in these wiles only the work of their fellows; he healed the dying and raised the dead; was transported by mysterious power and with marvellous speed from one place to another far away. Satan once employed physical force against him, and almost strangled him; the saint made the holy sign, said as well as he was able the name of the Blessed Virgin and a favorite hymn in her honor, and lo! his cell was filled with light whereby he saw his enemy flee from the place. He who loved the Immaculate Mother, and conquered by her name, won special favor from the Divine Son. A friend named Tiso, passing the saint's room one night, "saw brilliant rays of light streaming under the door, and on looking through the keyhole he saw a little child of marvellous beauty standing upon a book which lay upon the table, and clinging with both arms round Antony's neck. Who was he? But as he gazed, unable to take his eyes away, and saw the flood of heavenly light with which he was surrounded, and the ineffable tenderness with which he embraced Antony, and in return was caressed by him, and he felt his own soul

filled with an ineffable sweetness and rapture in watching the mutual endearments of the saint and his wondrous visitor, Tiso knew with a certainty that needed no further proof that it was indeed the Divine Babe of Bethlehem, who was consoling his favored servant and filling him with heavenly delight." It is also related that at Antony's death "he lifted his eyes to heaven and kept them fixed there, while his whole face beamed with a light and brightness strange to see in a dying man. Fra Ruggiero, who was supporting him in his arms, asked him what he saw, and he answered, very clearly, 'I see my God.'" Soon afterward the eyes closed to earthly things, to open forever upon the beatific vision.

Then suddenly, while still in Arcella the death was thought a secret, the children in Padua learned the truth by mysterious means. "Our Father St. Antony is dead," they cried, going about the city, tearful and sad; crowds hastened to the spot where the body lay. "Whither have you gone, loving Father of Padua?" So the lamentation rose, "Have you really gone away, and left behind the children who repented and were born again to Christ through you? Where shall we find another to preach to us orphans with such patience and charity?" As in a solemn triumph they bore him to the city from the quiet spot where he had died, and they laid him on a shrine. Then the miraculous power so great in life appeared more marvellous still in death. The touching of the very shrine gave healing; even outside of the church cures were effected upon persons who, because of the great crowd, could not enter. Through summer and winter, by day and night, processions came in penitence and prayer to honor Antony and seek his aid, and it was said that they who dared approach in a state of sin received no relief for their bodily ills, but after being

cleansed in the sacrament of penance the help they sought was granted. So great was the devotion, and so resplendent God's witness to Antony's sanctity, that, notwithstanding Rome's usual caution in such matters, this saint was canonized before the first anniversary of his death came. All the bells in Lisbon, his native place, rang of their own accord just at the time when in far-off Rome the sentence was pronounced. Year by year the miracles went on; diseases were cured, things lost were found, dangers at sea were escaped, infidels were converted, the dead were raised, and in this "practical," skeptical, nineteenth century, it is claimed by learned and God-fearing men that St. Antony's power is still exercised. What does all this mean?

Remember that not only worldlings display surprise and doubt in this regard. They are joined by myriads who call themselves Christians. Protestants, evangelical and unevangelical, are, for the most part, united here, that, granted miracles were ever wrought at all, the age of miracles is past, and a claim put forth for them is ordinarily regarded as proof positive that the claimant is either a deceiver or a dupe.

But down below this question lies the real difficulty. In this world, and on this day, men find themselves face to face with a Church which claims for herself, and for herself alone, all they are and all they have. She will give no quarter in the ceaseless war she wages. They must either be arrayed beneath her banner, or they must be her foes, whom, by weapons not of this world, but far more subtle, sure, and potent, she seeks with unremitting effort to conquer to her will. Greek, Russian, Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Unitarian, may hold out the right hand of fellowship to one another as they please, embracing in their strivings after unity each new sect as it rises, but persistently this

church of iron refuses every such advance. Those who ask to be united to her, she receives with the robe and the ring and the joyous feast, but it is noted of her that she receives none at all unless they come like the prodigal, with the prodigal's humble cry. These hate her as they hate nothing else on earth, far more than they hate sin. They dread her far more than they dread Satan. Everywhere they find her. Put forth the strong hand of civil law and banish her from one land, she rises in another, buoyant, unflinching. Nay, banish her, and behold she fears neither law nor death. With or without disguise, cunning as serpents, when men fancied themselves rid of her, her priests are among them, where only yesterday they were driven from the land.

Strange as the church they serve her servants are. The soldier, armed to the teeth, finds them unarmed among the Indian tribes; the savant meets them in his wanderings; they are side by side with, and often far in advance of the explorer and the adventurer. You cannot move them by the tender pleas which conquer other men; the name of wife or child is as nothing to them. Threaten them with loss of worldly goods, and they tell you that their very badge is poverty; send them to prison, and they count it honor; sentence them to death the most shameful, or load them with lifelong disgrace, and they thank you for a transcendent joy and glory which they declare they gain thereby. Talk of miracles as fairy tales! the things which her enemies say of her might rank in a like category, then, by their constant contradictions. She is tawdry and a sham, says one, and at the same instant another is bidding you beware of her exquisite beauty, her deadly charms. They accuse her of destroying Bible truth, yet have no choice but to grant that if they possess a true Bible at all today, it was she who preserved it for

them during ages commonly styled dark ages, but which she regards as glorious with Divine light. They say she gives an undue honor to saint and angel, yet find nowhere else such passionate devotion to Christ the Lord. They call her ambitious, and behold, the poor are crowding round her altars; they call her a tyrant, and her slaves declare such bondage to be better far than freedom; they call her a foe to science, and her scholars stand up with earth's wisest and surpass them all. Poetry and art and music have lavished for centuries their choicest treasures at her feet; she is adorned with all that is most rare and precious; yet she is found in the haunts of sin and squalor, among the poorest and the vilest, taking with serene patience the lowest place. A beggar's son may win her highest honors, and emperors cannot escape her stern rebuke.

Men strive hard to silence her, to cast dishonor on her reputation, to tear her children from her arms and lead them into other folds, or leave them desolate with no abiding-place. They declare themselves her equals and superiors; claim that they too send forth missionaries, that they too have sacraments and ministers, that they too pray, praise and give thanks. But speak of miracles wrought continuously, with no breaks and no doubts, from the time of Christ even to this very hour, and something is found at last which compels them to change their mode of warfare. It would be a dangerous thing indeed for them to grant the truth of such marvels, for they would thus tacitly concede to the Church which they rank as evil a power for good and strength and healing, which would shine forth in strange contradistinction to these sects which have it not. And so men calling themselves Christ's people do not shun to give her the lie; men saying week by week, and some of them day by day, "I believe in God . . . Almighty,"

protest that the servants of the Almighty have no power now to do what Jews could do before the world's Redeemer came with grander might; men claiming that the Bible, and the Bible only, is their religion, read there of One whose promise was that greater works than his had been his followers should do, and then limit the words of the Omnipotent to a time that suits themselves.

They have lost, God help them, the very meaning of the creed they often profess to hold. Refusing to hear the only voice that can guide us infallibly through the tangled maze of time, their minds comprehend no longer what their lips speak. They cannot fathom the depth of meaning, the glory and the strength of the last clause of the creed, the belief in God the Holy Ghost. Speaking to men unmistakably to-day as of old, speaking through a human instrument chosen by the Lord Himself, it is the unfailing and active presence of God the Holy Ghost that makes the Holy Catholic Church mistress and queen of nations, through honor and dishonor, through infamy and good name, dying, and behold, she lives, having nothing and yet possessing all things. She cannot be uprooted, in whom the very Lord and Giver of life dwells. She must work wonders when he is in her. Unabashed by the wild tumult round her, she puts forth her steady persistent declaration that she is "the Catholic Church of God, which he has established by innumerable miracles, and illustrated by the lives and deaths of innumerable saints."

But men who will not receive this, men who claim that a visible unity is not needful, or who are striving to gain back by their poor human devices the unity they have parted from, but could not break, have lost, too, the practical belief in the Communion of Saints, and have little or no practical conception of what the

Catholic Church is. The statesman of the time of Louis XIV would find his old ideas of statesmanship sadly out of place were he set down in the French cabinet of to-day, but he could a thousand times better undertake to guide the ship of state over those stormy seas, than Protestants can comprehend the animus and working of the Church of the Living God. She puts no limits to the power of her Supreme Master, sets no time when the signs of his omnipotence shall fail, deems it no marvel that miracles are wrought. To her great faith the only marvel she is capable of feeling, is that more are not wrought, and for this she never dreams of supposing that God is the cause, but while men are branding her with the stigma of gross superstition, or are calling her a liar, she is reproving her children with the Lord's tender reproof of old: "O ye of little faith, why do ye doubt?" She uses in her sciences another alphabet than man's. Her Communion of Saints implies a union with God, which wins the use of the very powers of God. His true Church lives upon His word. What has He not promised to faith? what has He denied to prayer? If leagues and mountains lie between His people and the accomplishment of His will, He who has made England and America talk together to-day as men talk face to face, shall make distance nothing, and bring mountains low at the prayer of faith.

Do we count Plato a babbler because he knew nothing of steamboats and engines, or Euripides an idiot because he never heard of the telescope and telegraph? But a veil which hung before their eyes has been withdrawn for us. It is not that we have more genius than they; it is that more knowledge has been revealed to us. Electricity and steam existed through all the centuries; it is a special use of them which we are enjoying. What finite mind can know, or predict, or so much as

fancy the hidden powers which an omniscient God still holds in reserve till He chooses to let us grasp them? He who made time and space, light and darkness, life and death, can do what He will with each and all. Had one ventured to tell the first settlers of Massachusetts, that a time was coming when across that ocean which they had struggled over wearily for weeks, a message would be sent in a moment, and men would read in their New England homes at night what had taken place in Old England only the night before, it is strongly to be suspected that he would have been denounced in Puritan meetings as a "light person," and a liar. Yet, that to them preposterous idea is an ordinary fact to-day. Shall the mind of God accomplish no more than His creature man can do, or shall He promise that whatever we ask we shall receive, and then fail in His promise because the usual human means have failed? The God in whom we trust is an Almighty God.

One important point in regard to one subject demands attention from us as citizens of the United States. It is true that Protestants in general have lost faith in that which is implied by the Communion of Saints, but it is also true that there exists among them a vague, hungry sense of that loss, and a reaching after something to fill the void. Spiritualism is the fruit of this, but still deadlier fruits are ripening for the future. We are told again and again that ours is a marvellous time and land, but hear it as often as we may, we are not capable of grasping the awful extent of the marvel. All through our South dwells a people among whom it is stated that the smouldering fires of their natural, Afric heathenism, are breaking out into a lurid flame. Upon our prairies, many red men, smarting with cruel wrongs, worship their Great Spirit still. Asia is sending her children among us, and the Chinese

joss-house is found in this land which in common parlance bears the name of Christian. We are seeing the dawn of a terrible day.

Satan has greater knowledge than any scholar among us; he knows well that there is in the marvellous a mighty power for good or for ill; he has a patient cunning and a ready wit. Time and again he has striven to match himself with God; he is gathering his forces to try the deadly war again. When the hour comes that he "shall show great signs and wonders," what shall be able to cope with him except a Church that can, like Moses and Aaron in Egypt, and our blessed Lord and his disciples in Palestine, do works more wondrous? And how shall there be pointed out to discordant sects and infidels and heathens the only path that leads to truth? What shall avail to snatch them from error as brands from the burning, except a voice which is infallible and unmistakable, the very centre of unity, the present and un-failing instrument of God the Holy Ghost?

The Chronicle of St. Antony bears on the page which corresponds to an ordinary dedication page a prayer of the saint, which later in the volume is translated thus:

"O Light of the world, infinite God, Father of eternity, Giver of wisdom and knowledge, and ineffable Dispenser of every spiritual grace, who knowest all things before they are made, who makest the darkness and the light, put forth Thy hand and touch my mouth, and make it as a sharp sword to utter eloquently Thy words. Make my tongue, O Lord, as a chosen arrow, to declare faithfully Thy wonders; put Thy spirit, O Lord, in my heart that I may perceive, in my soul that I may retain, and in my conscience that I may meditate; do Thou lovingly, holily, mercifully, clemently, and gently inspire me with Thy grace; do Thou teach, guide, and strengthen the comings in and the goings out of

my senses and my thoughts, and let
Thy discipline instruct me even to
the end, and the counsel of the Most
High help me through Thine infinite
wisdom and mercy. Amen."

Though more than six hundred

years are gone since the great saint
prayed this prayer, may it receive
even in our day an answer, while he
preaches to us one great lesson of the
faith.

AT LAST.

My life, it has been long,
And the years have sped away,
And in my youth, although they ran,
I wished them not to stay.

But the prime of youth did pass,
And I said to Time: "Run slower.
O bear not away the spring of life,
That cometh to me no more!"

But Time made answer grave:
"The summer doth follow spring;
If ye have sown in the early year,
The summer the fruits will bring."

But I smote my breast in grief,
For not a seed had I sown,
And I knew no fruits are for idle men,
But for him that has toiled alone.

The summer did come and go,
And lonely and sad was I.
I said to myself: "When autumn comes
I will lay me down and die."

And I said to Time: "O Time,
My sorrow is great to bear.
Will autumn seeds not bring forth fruit,
If tended with tears and care?"

But Time made answer grave:
"The winter cometh fast.
What! can ye hope for a harvest still,
When ye let the seedtime waste?"

At the calm, cold words of Time,
There fell on my heart a chill;
But autumn winds swept over the land,
And they roused my sleeping will.

I said: "It is *not* too late;
 I will not sit still and sigh;
 Others have reaped in the waning year;
 It is better to do than die."

Deep down in the dark chill earth,
 I digged a pit for the seed;
 I loved the hope that sprung in my heart,
 And strengthened my soul in need.

Day after day I worked,
 And tended it night by night,
 And loosed the soil for the tender plant
 That was springing out of sight.

But the winter snow did come,
 And the chilling wind and frost;
 My pulses throbbed as I watched the storm,
 For I feared that my hope was lost.

Despair would knock at the door,
 But I never would let him in;
 I thawed the ice with my own warm tears,
 And remembered distrust was sin.

Slowly the plant would grow,
 And the little shoots appear,
 And "Alas!" I cried, "for the wasted months;
 Alas! for the wasted year."

And I said to Time: "O Time,
 I would I could make thee wait;
 I would I could turn thy footsteps back,
 For I fear I have toiled too late."

And Time made answer cold:
 "Thou bringst me evil repute;
 I warned thee spring was the time for seed,
 And autumn the time for fruit."

* * * * *

As waters that bound by frost
 Take life again from the sun,
 So thus my heart when I heard the words:
 "Thy labor and work is done.

"Thy faith and thy sleepless nights,
 Thy tears and thy prayers are known;
 Turn thee; behold the golden fruit,
 From the little seed thou hast sown."

I turned—'twas an angel; lo!
 He had bound the fruit in a wreath;
 I saw his face, and I knew him then—
 I knew that his name was Death.

HALF A LIFETIME AGO.

A LOVE STORY IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.

THE vehemence with which Susan Dixon threw herself into occupation could not last forever. Times of languor and remembrance would come—times when she recurred with a passionate yearning to past days, the recollection of which was so vivid and delicious, that it seemed as though it were the reality, and the present bleak bareness the dream. She smiled anew at the magical sweetness of some touch or tone which in memory she felt and heard, and drank the delicious cup of poison, although at the very time she knew what the consequence of racking pain would be.

“This time, last year,” thought she, “we went nutting together—this very day last year; just such a day as to-day. Purple and gold were the lights on the hills; the leaves were just turning brown; here and there on the sunny slopes the stubble-fields looked tawny; down in a cleft of yon purple slate-rock the beck fell like a silver glancing thread; all just as it is to-day. And he climbed the slender swaying nut-trees, and bent the branches for me to gather; or made a passage through the hazel copses, from time to time claiming a toll. Who could have thought he loved me so little?—who? who?”

Or, as the evening closed in, she would allow herself to imagine that she heard his coming step, just that she might recall the feeling of exquisite delight which had passed by without the due and passionate relish at the time. Then she would wonder how she could have had strength, the cruel self-piercing strength, to say what she had done;

to stab herself with that stern resolution, of which the scar would remain till her dying day. It might have been right; but, as she sickened, she wished she had not instinctively chosen the right. How luxurious a life haunted by no stern sense of duty must be! And many led this kind of life; why could not she? O, for one hour again of his sweet company! If he came now, she would agree to whatever he proposed.

It was a fever of the mind. She passed through it, and came out healthy, if weak. She was capable once more of taking pleasure in following an unseen guide through brier and brake. She returned with tenfold affection to her protecting care of Willie. She acknowledged to herself that he was to be her all-in-all in life. She made him her constant companion. For his sake, as the real owner of Yew Nook, and she as his steward and guardian, she began that course of careful saving, and that love of acquisition, which afterwards gained for her the reputation of being miserly. She still thought that he might regain a scanty portion of sense,—enough to require some simple pleasures and excitement, which would cost money. And money should not be wanting. Peggy rather assisted her in the formation of her parsimonious habits than otherwise; economy was the order of the district, and a certain degree of respectable avarice the characteristic of age. Only Willie was never stinted or hindered of anything that the two women thought could give him pleasure for want of money.

There was one gratification which Susan felt was needed for the restoration of her mind to its more

healthy state, after she had passed through the whirling fever, when duty was as nothing, and anarchy reigned; a gratification, that somehow was to be her last burst of unreasonableness; of which she knew and recognized pain as the sure consequence. She must see him once more,—herself unseen.

The week before the Christmas of this memorable year, she went out in the dusk of the early winter evening, wrapped up close in shawl and cloak. She wore her dark shawl under her cloak, putting it over her head in lieu of a bonnet; for she knew that she might have to wait long in concealment. Then she tramped over the wet fell-path, shut in by misty rain for miles and miles, till she came to the place where he was lodging; a farm-house in Langdale, with a steep stony lane leading up to it: this lane was entered by a gate out of the main road, and by the gate were a few bushes—thorns; but of them the leaves had fallen, and they offered no concealment: an old wreck of a yew tree grew among them, however, and underneath that Susan cowered down, shrouding her face, of which the color might betray her, with a corner of her shawl. Long did she wait; cold and cramped she became, too damp and stiff to change her posture readily. And after all, he might never come! But, she would wait till daylight, if need were; and she pulled out a crust, with which she had providently supplied herself. The rain had ceased—a dull still brooding weather had succeeded; it was a night to hear distant sounds. She heard horses' hoofs striking and plashing in the stones, and in the pools of the road at her back. Two horses; not well-riden, or evenly guided, as she could tell.

Michael Hurst and a companion drew near; not tipsy, but not sober. They stopped at the gate to bid each other a maudlin farewell. Michael stooped forward to catch the latch

with the hook of the stick which he carried; he dropped the stick, and it fell with one end close to Susan—indeed, with the slightest change of posture, she could have opened the gate for him. He swore a great oath, and struck his horse with his closed fist, as if that animal had been to blame; then he dismounted, opened the gate, and fumbled about for his stick. When he had found it (Susan had touched the other end) his first use of it was to flog his horse well, and she had much ado to avoid its kicks and plunges. Then, still swearing, he staggered up the lane, for it was evident he was not sober enough to remount.

By daylight Susan was back and at her daily labors at Yew Nook. When the spring came, Michael Hurst was married to Eleanor Hebthwaite. Others, too, were married, and christenings made their firesides merry and glad; or they travelled, and came back after long years with many wondrous tales. More rarely, perhaps, a Dalesman changed his dwelling. But to all households more change came than to Yew Nook. There the seasons came round with monotonous sameness; or, if they brought mutation, it was of a slow, and decaying, and depressing kind. Old Peggy died. Her silent sympathy, concealed under much roughness, was a loss to Susan Dixon. Susan was not yet thirty when this happened, but she looked a middle-aged, not to say an elderly woman. People affirmed that she had never recovered her complexion since that fever, a dozen years ago, which killed her father, and left Willie Dixon an idiot. But besides her gray sallowness, the lines in her face were strong, and deep, and hard. The movements of her eyeballs were slow and heavy; the wrinkles at the corners of her mouth and eyes were planted firm and sure; not an ounce of unnecessary flesh was there on her bones—every muscle started strong and ready for use. She

needed all this bodily strength to a degree that no human creature, now Peggy was dead, knew of: for Willie had grown up large and strong in body, and, in general, docile enough in mind; but, every now and then, he became first moody, and then violent. These paroxysms lasted but a day or two; and it was Susan's anxious care to keep their very existence hidden and unknown. It is true that occasional passers-by on that lonely road heard sounds at night of knocking about of furniture, blows, and cries, as of some tearing demon within the solitary farm-house; but these fits of violence usually occurred in the night; and whatever had been their consequence, Susan had tidied and red up all signs of aught unusual before the morning. For, above all, she dreaded lest some one might find out in what danger and peril she occasionally was, and might assume a right to take away her brother from her care. The one idea of taking charge of him had deepened and deepened with years. It was graven into her mind as the object for which she lived. The sacrifice she had made for this object only made it more precious to her. Besides, she separated the idea of the docile, affectionate, loutish, indolent Will, and kept it distinct from the terror which the demon that occasionally possessed him inspired her with. The one was her flesh and her blood,—the child of her dead mother; the other was some fiend who came to torture and convulse the creature she so loved. She believed that she fought her brother's battle in holding down those tearing hands, in binding whenever she could those uplifted restless arms prompt and prone to do mischief. All the time she subdued him with her cunning or her strength, she spoke to him in pitying murmurs, or abused the third person, the fiendish enemy, in no unmeasured tones. Towards morning the paroxysm was exhausted,

and he would fall asleep, perhaps only to waken with evil and renewed vigor. But when he was laid down she would sally out to taste the fresh air, and to work off her wild sorrow in cries and mutterings to herself. The early laborers saw her gestures at a distance, and thought her as crazed as the idiot brother who made the neighborhood a haunted place. But did any chance person call at Yew Nook later, or in the day, he would find Susan Dixon cold, calm, collected; her manner curt, her wits keen.

Once this fit of violence lasted longer than usual. Susan's strength both of mind and body was nearly worn out; she wrestled in prayer that somehow it might end before she, too, was driven mad; or, worse, might be obliged to give up her life's aim, and consign Willie to a mad-house. From that moment of prayer (as she afterwards superstitiously thought) Willie calmed—and then he drooped—and then he sank—and, last of all, he died, in reality from physical exhaustion.

But he was so gentle and tender as he lay on his dying bed; such strange childlike gleams of returning intelligence came over his face long after the power to make his dull inarticulate sounds had departed, that Susan was attracted to him by a stronger tie than she had ever felt before. It was something to have even an idiot loving her with dumb, wistful, animal affection; something to have any creature looking at her with such beseeching eyes, imploring protection from the insidious enemy stealing on. And yet she knew that to him death was no enemy but a true friend, restoring light and health to his poor clouded mind. It was to her that death was an enemy; to her, the survivor, when Willie died: there was no one to love her. Worse doom still, there was no one left on earth for her to love.

You now know why no wandering tourist could persuade her to receive

him as a lodger; why no tired traveller could melt her heart to give him rest and refreshment; why long habits of seclusion had given her a moroseness of manner, and care for the interests of another had rendered her keen and miserly.

But there was a third act in the drama of her life.

CHAPTER V.

IN spite of Peggy's prophecy that Susan's life should not seem long, it did seem wearisome and endless as year by year slowly uncoiled their monotonous circles. To be sure, she might have made change for herself, but she did not care to do it. It was, indeed, more than "not caring," which merely implies a certain degree of *vis inertiae* to be subdued before an object can be attained, and that the object itself does not seem to be of sufficient importance to call out the requisite energy. On the contrary, Susan exerted herself to avoid change and variety. She had a morbid dread of new faces, which originated in her desire to keep poor dead Willie's state a profound secret. She had a contempt for new customs; and indeed her old ways prospered so well under her active hand and vigilant eye, that it was difficult to know how they could be improved upon. She was regularly present in Coniston market with the best butter and the earliest chickens of the season. Those were the common farm produce that every farmer's wife about had to sell; but Susan, after she had disposed of the more feminine articles, turned to on the man's side. A better judge of a horse or cow there was not in all the country round. Yorkshire itself might have attempted to jockey her, and would have failed. Her corn was sound and clean; her potatoes well preserved to the latest spring. People began to talk of the hoards of money Susan Dixon must have laid up some-

where; and one young ne'er-do-well of a farmer's son undertook to make love to the woman of forty, who looked fifty-five, if a day. He made up to her by opening a gate on the road-path home, as she was riding on a bare-backed horse, her purchase not an hour ago. She was off before him, refusing his civility; but the remounting was not so easy, and rather than fail she did not choose to attempt it. She walked, and he walked alongside, improving his opportunity, which, as he vainly thought, had been granted consciously to him. As they drew near Yew Nook, he ventured on some expression of a wish to keep company with her. His words were vague and clumsily arranged. Susan turned round and coolly asked him to explain himself. He took courage, as he thought of her reputed wealth, and expressed his wishes this second time pretty plainly. To his surprise the reply she made was in a series of smart strokes across his shoulders, administered through the medium of a supple hazel-switch.

"Take that!" said she, almost breathless, "to teach thee how thou darest make a fool of an honest woman, old enough to be thy mother. If thou com'st a step nearer the house, there's a good horse-pool, and there's two stout fellows who'll like no better fun than ducking thee. Be off wi' thee."

And she strode into her own premises, never looking round to see whether he obeyed her injunction or not.

Sometimes three or four years would pass over without her hearing Michael Hurst's name mentioned. She used to wonder at such times whether he were dead or alive. She would sit for hours by the dying embers of her fire on a winter's evening, trying to recall the scenes of her youth; trying to bring up living pictures of the faces she had then known, Michael's most especially. She thought that it was possible, so

long had been the lapse of years, that she might now pass by him in the street unknowing and unknown. His outward form she might not recognize, but himself she should feel in the thrill of her whole being. He could not pass her unawares.

What little she did hear about him all testified a downward tendency. He drank, not at stated times when there was no other work to be done, but continually, whether it was seed-time or harvest. His children were ill at one time; then one died, while the others recovered, but were poor sickly things. No one dared to give Susan any direct intelligence of her former lover; many avoided all mention of his name in her presence; but a few spoke out either in indifference to or ignorance of those by-gone days. Susan heard every word, every whisper, every sound that related to him. But her eye never changed, nor did a muscle of her face move.

Late one November night she sate over her fire, not a human being besides herself in the house; none but she had ever slept there since Willie's death. The farm-laborers had foddered the cattle and gone home hours before. There were crickets chirping all round the warm hearth-stones, there was the clock ticking with the peculiar beat Susan had known ever since childhood, and which then and ever since she had oddly associated with the idea of a mother and child talking together, one loud tick, and quick—a feeble sharp one following.

The day had been keen and piercingly cold. The whole lift of heaven seemed a dome of iron. Black and frost-bound was the earth under the cruel east wind. Now the wind had dropped, and as the darkness had gathered in, the weather-wise old laborers prophesied snow. The sounds in the air arose again, as Susan sate still and silent. They were of a different character to what they had been during the prevalence of

the east wind. Then they had been shrill and piping, now they were like low distant growling, not unmusical, but strangely threatening. Susan went to the window, and drew aside the little curtain. The whole world was white, the air was blinded with the swift and heavy downfall of snow. At present it came down straight, but Susan knew those distant sounds in the hollows and gulches of the hills portended a driving wind and a more cruel storm. She thought of her sheep; were they all folded? the new-born calf, was it bedded well? Before the drifts were formed too deep for her to pass in and out, and by the morning she judged that they would be six or seven feet deep, she would go out and see after the comfort of her beasts. She took a lantern, and tied a shawl over her head, and went out into the open air. She cared tenderly for all her animals, and was returning, when borne on the blasts as if some spirit-cry, for it seemed to come rather down from the skies than from any creature standing on earth's level, she heard a voice of agony; she could not distinguish words; it seemed rather if some bird of prey was being caught in the whirl of the icy wind, and torn and tortured by its violence. Again! up high above! Susan put down her lantern, and shouted loud in return; it was an instinct, for if the creature were not human, which she had doubted but a moment before, what good could her responding cry do? And her cry was seized on by the tyrannous wind, and borne farther away in the opposite direction to that from which that call of agony had proceeded. Again she listened; no sound; then again it rang through space; and this time she was sure it was human. She turned into the house, and heaped turf and wood on the fire, which, careless of her own sensations, she had allowed to fade and almost die out. She put a new candle in her lantern; she changed

her shawl for a maud, and leaving the door on latch, she sallied out. Just at the moment when her ear first encountered the weird noises of the storm, on issuing forth into the open air, she thought she heard the words: "O, God! O, help!" They were a guide to her, if words they were, for they came straight from a rock not a quarter of a mile from Yew Nook, but only to be reached, on account of its precipitous character, by a roundabout path. Thither she steered, defying wind and snow; guided by here a thorn-tree, there an old doddered oak, which had not quite lost their identity under the whelming mask of snow. Now and then she stopped to listen, but never a word or sound heard she, till right from where the copsewood grew thick and tangled at the base of the rock, round which she was winding, she heard a moan. Into the break, all snow in appearance, almost a plain of snow looked on from the little eminence where she stood, she plunged, breaking down the bush, stumbling, bruising herself, fighting her way; her lantern held between her teeth, and she herself using head as well as hands to butt away a passage, at whatever cost of bodily injury. As she climbed or staggered, owing to the unevenness of the snow-covered ground, where the briars and weeds of years were tangled and matted together, her foot felt something strangely soft and yielding. She lowered her lantern; there lay a man, prone on his face, nearly covered by the fast-falling flakes; he must have fallen from the rock above, as not knowing of the circuitous path, he had tried to descend its steep, slippery face. Who could tell? It was no time for thinking. Susan lifted him up with her wiry strength; he gave no help—no sign of life, but for all that he might be alive; he was still warm; she tied her maud round him; she fastened the lantern to her apron-string; she

held him tight, half dragging, half carrying; what did a few bruises signify to him, compared to dear life, to precious life! She got him through the break and down the path. There for an instant she stopped to take breath; but as if stung by the Furies, she pushed on again with almost superhuman strength. Claspings him round the waist, and leaning his dead weight against the lintel of the door, she tried to undo the latch; but now, just at this moment, a trembling faintness came over her, and a fearful dread took possession of her; that here on the very threshold of her home she might be found dead, and buried under the snow, when the farm-servants came in the morning. This terror stirred her up to one more effort. She and her companion were in the warmth of the quiet haven of the kitchen; she laid him on the settle, and sank on the floor by his side. How long she remained in swoon she could not tell; not very long she judged by the fire, which was still red and sullenly glowing when she came to herself. She lighted the candle, and bent over her late burden to ascertain if indeed he were dead. She stood long gazing. The man lay dead. There could be no doubt about it. His filmy eyes glared at her, unshut. But Susan was not one to be affrighted by the stony aspect of death. It was not that; it was the bitter, woful recognition of Michael Hurst.

She was convinced he was dead, but after awhile she refused to believe in her conviction. She stripped off his wet outer-garments with trembling, hurried hands. She brought a blanket down from her own bed; she made up the fire. She swathed him up in fresh, warm wrappings, and laid him on the flags before the fire, sitting herself at his head, and holding it in her lap, while she tenderly wiped his loose, wet hair, curly still, although its

color had changed from nut-brown to iron-gray since she had seen it last. From time to time she bent over the face afresh, sick and fain to believe that the flicker of the fire-light was some slight convulsive motion. But the dim, staring eyes struck chill to her heart. At last she ceased her delicate, busy cares, but she still held the head softly, as if caressing it. She thought over all the possibilities and chances in the mingled yarn of their lives that might, by so slight a turn, have ended far otherwise. If her mother's cold had been early tended, so that the responsibility as to her brother's weal or woe had not fallen upon her; if the fever had not taken such rough, cruel hold on Will; nay, if Mrs. Gale, that hard, worldly sister, had not accompanied him on his last visit to Yew Nook, his very last before this fatal stormy night; if she had heard his cry—cry uttered by those pale, dead lips, with such wild, despairing agony not yet three hours ago! O! if she had but heard it sooner, he might have been saved before that blind, false step had precipitated him down the rock! In going over this weary chain of unrealized possibilities Susan learnt the force of Peggy's words. Life was short, looking back upon it. It seemed but yesterday since all the love of her being had been poured out, and run to waste. The intervening years, the long monotonous years that had turned her into an old woman before her time, were but a dream.

The laborers coming in the dawn of the winter's day were surprised to see the firelight through the low kitchen window. They knocked, and hearing a moaning answer, they entered, fearing that something had befallen their mistress. For all explanation they got these words:

"It is Michael Hurst. He was belated, and fell down the Raven's Crag. Where does Eleanor, his wife, live?"

How Michael Hurst got to Yew Nook no one but Susan ever knew. They thought he had dragged himself there with some sore, internal bruise sapping away his minuted life. They could not have believed the superhuman exertion which had first sought him out, and then dragged him hither. Only Susan knew of that.

She gave him into the charge of her servants, and went out and saddled her horse. Where the wind had drifted the snow on one side, and the road was clear and bare, she rode, and rode fast; where the soft, deceitful heaps were massed up, she dismounted and led her steed, plunging in deep, with fierce energy, the pain at her heart urging her onwards with a sharp, digging spur.

The gray, solemn, winter's noon was more nightlike than the depth of summer's night; dim purple brooded the low skies over the white earth, as Susan rode up to what had been Michael Hurst's abode while living. It was a small farmhouse, carelessly kept outside, slatternly attended within. The pretty Nelly Hebthwaite was pretty still; her delicate face had never suffered from any long-enduring feeling. If anything, its expression was that of plaintive sorrow; but the soft light hair had scarcely a tinge of gray, the wood-rose tint of complexion yet remained, if not so brilliant as in youth; the straight nose, the small mouth were untouched by time. Susan felt the contrast even at that moment. She knew that her own skin was weather-beaten, furrowed, brown—that her teeth were gone, and her hair gray and ragged. And yet she was not two years older than Nelly—she had not been in youth, when she took account of these things. Nelly stood wondering at the strange-enough horsewoman, who stood and panted at the door, holding her horse's bridle, and refusing to enter.

"Where is Michael Hurst?" asked Susan, at last.

"Well, I can't rightly say. He should have been at home last night, but he was off seeing after a public house to be let at Ulverstone, for our farm does not answer, and we were thinking—"

"He did not come home last night?" said Susan, cutting short the story, and half-affirming, half-questioning, by way of letting in a ray of the awful light before she let it full in, in its consuming wrath.

"No! he'll be stopping somewhere out Ulverstone ways. I'm sure we've need of him at home, for I've no one but life Tommy to help me to tend the beasts. Things have not gone well with us, and we don't keep a servant now. But you're trembling all over, ma'am. You'd better come in, and take something warm, while your horse rests. That's the stable-door, to your left."

Susan took her horse there; loosened his girths, and rubbed him down with a wisp of straw. Then she looked about her for hay; but the place was bare of food, and smelt damp and unused. She went to the house, thankful for the respite, and got some clap-bread, which she mashed up in a pailful of lukewarm water. Every moment was a respite, and yet every moment made her dread the more the task that lay before her. It would be longer than she thought at first. She took the saddle off, and hung about her horse, which seemed somehow more like a friend than anything else in the world. She laid her cheek against its neck, and rested there, before returning to the house for the last time.

Eleanor had brought down one of her own gowns, which hung on a chair against the fire, and had made her unknown visitor a cup of hot tea. Susan could hardly bear all these little attentions; they choked her, and yet she was so wet, so weak with fatigue and excitement that she could neither

resist by word or by action. Two children stood awkwardly about, puzzled at the scene, and even Eleanor began to wish for some explanation of who her strange visitor was.

"You've maybe heard him speak of me? I'm called Susan Dixon."

Nelly colored, and avoided meeting Susan's eye.

"I've heard other folk speak of you. He never named your name."

This respect of silence came like balm to Susan; balm not felt or heeded at the time it was applied, but very grateful in its effects for all that.

"He is at my house," continued Susan, determined not to stop or quaver in the operation—the pain which must be inflicted.

"At your house? Yew Nook?" questioned Eleanor, surprised. "How came he there?"—half-jealously. "Did he take shelter from the coming storm? Tell me,—there is something—tell me, woman!"

"He took no shelter. Would to God he had?"

"Oh! would to God! would to God!" shrieked out Eleanor, learning all from the woful import of those dreary eyes. Her cries thrilled through the house; the children's piping wailings and passionate cries of "Daddy! Daddy!" pierced into Susan's very marrow. But she remained as still and tearless as the great round face upon the clock.

At last, in a lull of crying, she said,—not exactly questioning—but as if partly to herself,—

"You loved him, then?"

"Love him! he was my husband! He was the father of three bonny bairns that lie dead in Grasmere Churchyard. I wish you'd go, Susan Dixon, and let me weep without your watching me! I wish you'd never come near the place."

"Alas! alas! it would not have brought him to life. I would have laid down my own to save his. My life has been so very sad! No one

would have cared if I had died. Alas! alas!"

The tone in which she said this was so utterly mournful and despairing that it awed Nelly into quiet for a time. But by and by she said, "I would not turn a dog out to do it harm; but the night is clear, and Tommy shall guide you to the Red Cow. But, O! I want to be alone. If you'll come back to-morrow, I'll be better, and I'll hear all, and thank you for every kindness you have shown him,—and I do believe you've showed him kindness,—though I don't know why."

Susan moved heavily and strangely.

She said something—her words came thick and unintelligible. She had had a paralytic stroke since she had last spoken. She could not go, even if she would. Nor did Eleanor, when she became aware of the state of the case, wish her to leave. She

had her laid on her own bed, and weeping silently all the while for her lost husband, she nursed Susan like a sister. She did not know what her guest's worldly position might be; and she might never be repaid. But she sold many a little trifle to purchase such small comforts as Susan might need. Susan, lying still and motionless, learnt much. It was not a severe stroke; it might be the forerunner of others yet to come, but at some distance of time. But for the present she recovered, and regained much of her former health. On her sick-bed she matured her plans. When she returned to Yew Nook, she took Michael Hurst's widow and children with her to live there, and fill up the haunted hearth with living forms that should banish the ghosts.

And so it fell out that the latter days of Susan Dixon's life were better than the former.

EARLY CHRISTIAN ART.*

IN a season of conflict, at a time when the forebodings of Christian hearts are full of trials and sorrows, the Italian Jesuit, Father Raffaele Garrucci, has girded himself to the labor of collecting and illustrating the monuments of early Christian art, and of grounding on them an authentic and exhaustive history of art during the first eight centuries of our era. As far as may be gathered from what he has already given to the public, the author's plan may be thus described. He first presents us with a well-filled pictorial atlas, consisting of finished engravings of all the monuments of plastic and pictorial art, belonging to that epoch.

The paintings of the Catacombs and others preserved to us from that date, the tracings on glass, the mosaics of architectural monuments, the various *rilievi* and figures on sarcophagi, shrines, vases, and jewels, will each be represented in this collection. Every engraving is accompanied by an explanation of its subject and purport. The whole work will close with a systematic history of art, in which the development of art will be treated with special reference to the history of the Church and of civilization.

Of the interest attaching to such an undertaking there can be as little question as of its importance. Requiring, as it must, a deep and varied acquaintance with the several branches of sacred and profane learning, it is eminently fitted to cast a

* The History of Christian Art in the first eight centuries of the Catholic Church. Illustrated by a collection of all the monuments of painting and sculpture, graven on copper, on five hundred plates, etc. Prato: Francesco Giachetti, 1872-1876.

new and searching light on most of the problems with which they are concerned. Waiving, for the nonce, our interest in them as Catholics, it is obvious that the art monuments of Christian antiquity are of no less importance to history, philology, and æsthetics, than the Egyptian monuments, the inscriptions and the colossal remains which Layard's Assyrian researches have recently brought to light. Nay, more; they are in closer contact with the present stage of civilization; they bear a special significance for our history, literature, and art; and it is simply narrow-minded to ignore the deep interest with which the monuments of the Catacombs and of early Christian art may claim to inspire every man of cultivated mind.

But whatever its importance for the mere student of art, as the connecting link between the Græco-Roman art of classical antiquity and the mediæval and *Renaissance* periods, there can be no question as to its deep significance for Catholics, who possess the key to the varied symbolism of this particular period, and can discern in it the idea and the dogmatic germs which it infolds. The theologian may here find, not only the veneration of the saints and of their memorials, but the adoption of art in the divine liturgy, as a means of expressing the central truths of redemption, of the nature and operation of grace, of the constitution of the Church, of baptismal regeneration, of the Eucharist, penance, and the resurrection. The dogmas inculcated by the holy Fathers in their homilies and catecheses are here pictorially displayed; and of no less value to biblical exegesis are the numerous correspondences between the Old and New Testaments, the prophetic types and utterances, and the realities they foreshadowed, which witness to the keen insight of our forefathers in the faith into the depths of Sacred Scripture. The canonist, too, will

here meet with many an illustration of the laws and usages of the early Church. But while thus increasing the goodly store of ecclesiastical science, it embodies for us the message of those early ages, telling us of our lot in the inheritance which they have handed down to us, at the cost of all that the world and human nature hold dear, setting forth to us, in visible, palpable shape, the mysteries of that faith which welds the present with the past, the outward signs of sacramental grace, the fellowship of the saints, the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church—in a word, the whole economy of the Incarnation. Not only is such a collection a mute, but irrefragable apology, it is an exhortation, an encouragement, quickening anew failing hope, whispering to the weary and faint-hearted, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered; the Church went forth from the Catacombs to take possession of the world, even the selfsame Church that is now struggling with the powers of darkness!"

It is no disparagement to the author to set forth his obligations to his predecessors in the same line of research. These are Bosio, Arringhi, Marchi, De Rossi, Perret, and Serieux d'Agincourt. With the exception of the last named, their studies were confined all but exclusively to the Roman Catacombs. As may be gathered from the title of his book, Father Garrucci's investigations range over a far more extensive field; yet, so far forth as he deals with the same subject-matter, his work is not to be deemed as a merely perfunctory reproduction of results previously obtained.

Of the writers above named, the oldest is Bosio, a Maltese, who has bequeathed to us in his *Roma Sotterranea* the fruits of five-and-thirty years' unwearied, conscientious, and thorough exploration of the Catacombs. He was not spared to complete his great work, which is not

devoid of the shortcomings attaching, of necessity, to a first essay. The artists he employed to copy the pictures in the Catacombs were not very careful of accuracy, and in many cases they omitted, added, or altered details, those of costume, for instance, according to their tastes or whims. As regards the written commentary on these early paintings, we must bear in mind that Bosio had not at hand the works of Marchi or De Rossi. The study of history in its sources, the divers other helps to an accurate investigation of the monuments of bygone ages, which are so abundantly supplied to us, were unknown to him. He did not live to see the publication of his own work, the first edition of which appeared in 1632, three years after his death. It was republished with a Latin text some nineteen years later, by Arringhi. By order of Pope Clement the Twelfth, Bottari sent forth a new edition of Bosio's engravings, to which he appended a new text, leaving, however, the illustrations just as he found them. It is thus that, despite their shortcomings and imperfections, they remained until lately the common source of information concerning the paintings and art-history of the Catacombs.

This state of things has been considerably modified by Father Marchi and the Cavaliere de Rossi, the former of whom submitted many of these engravings to a serious revision, besides discovering and copying many new pictures. De Rossi, too, corrected and explained a large number of these points, both in his *Roma Sotterranea*, in his pictures of the Madonna, and in his *Bolletino Archeologico*. Yet it must be said, that for obvious reasons, the revision of De Rossi has hitherto left untouched the greater portion of Bosio's drawings,—enough to show that room has been left for Father Garrucci to make for himself a high position among the explorers of the

Catacombs. We may form some notion of the range of his labors, by taking into account that the pictures contained in De Rossi's *Roma Sotterranea* fill but eighteen out of the ninety Roman plates of Father Garrucci; four others are taken from the *Bolletino*, six from Father Marchi's works and manuscripts, three from various monographs by other writers. The destruction of the monuments rendered impossible the revision of some fourteen plates. Thus one-half of the collection, in other words, no less than forty-five plates, containing in all about one hundred and fifty pictures, have been, for the most part, subjected by Father Garrucci to a most conscientious and critical revision; that is, they have been collated with their originals in the Catacombs, and thus every one of the engravings published by Bottari has either been corrected in its least details, or, when needful, replaced by new and carefully taken copies. The like improvement is discernible also in the accompanying explanations and descriptions.

But Father Garrucci's researches are not confined to the Roman Catacombs; he has also taken in hand those of Naples, which he inspected in person, accompanied by an eminent Roman artist, for the purpose of getting accurate copies of the paintings and sculptures therein contained. He has further enriched his valuable Neapolitan collection with cemeterial paintings from Milan, Alexandria, Cyrene, and Lybia. His plan, moreover, included the early Christian remains of France, Sicily, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. But the celebrated crypt at Rheims had been destroyed in 1802, the dawn of our present period of culture and of free thought, and it could be studied only in the incomplete description De Pouilly has left us. He could obtain but some faulty drawings of the Syracusan Catacombs, and as for Alexandria, he had to make the most of the, to him, doleful news of the

wholesale destruction of its early Christian memorials, and to content himself with Layard's bare assurance, that in the course of his explorations in Mesopotamia, he had met with some early Christian tombs.

Despite, however, these drawbacks, Father Garrucci's collection far surpasses, both in extent and accuracy, those of his predecessors in this line of research. Its value to science is further enhanced by the well-tryed critical acumen and the personal weight of the author. Like De Rossi, he was the friend and disciple of Padre Marchi, who opened to him the mysteries of underground Rome, and fired him with his own inextinguishable ardor for that line of study, schooling him meanwhile in that laborious yet fruitful method of his, which has been productive of results most precious for archæological science. We may now account for his not having devoted himself to one or the other branch of Christian archæology, which he has enriched in more than one of its most important parts with discoveries of much value.

His first publication on the *Mysteries of Phrygian Syncretism** solved a most intricate archæological problem, which had hitherto baffled the subtlety and perseverance of many an investigator, and given grounds for ascribing to Paganism an undue influence over the development of Christian art. While engaged on this subject he took occasion thoroughly to master the distinctive features of Pagan, Jewish, Christian, and Gnostic burial-places. The publication of the collection of l'Heu-

reux, which had been prepared for the press in 1605, and had waited full two centuries and a half for an editor, afforded him the long-wished-for opportunity of studying the earlier contributions to the literature of the Catacombs. Herewith were connected various studies of epigraphy and iconography, which stood him in good stead in his dissertation on the crucifix. He further submitted the gilt glass vessels of the Catacombs to a thorough investigation, - the results of which he published in a work still held in high esteem, and which, having been twice edited, remains to this day the great authority on this branch of the antiquities of art. The discovery of the Jewish cemetery in the Randanini vineyard led him to devote himself anew to the special study of the cemeteries, and has brought to light many valuable data bearing on what may be styled the critical treatment of the subterranean tombs. Thus the work to which we call notice, the matured fruit of a thorough acquaintance with the monuments of early Christian art, is the result of the comprehensive archæological studies to which the author has devoted his life.

We will now endeavor to give the reader a few summary indications of the plan and contents of the *History of Christian Art*, as far as it has yet appeared. One volume of the portfolio of engravings has already been published under the title, *Pitture Cimiteriali*, which contains, on one hundred and eight plates, well-nigh three hundred mural paintings from the Catacombs of Rome and Naples, to which are added a selection of others taken in other parts of Christendom, and arranged in topographical order.

The first impression arising, even from a cursory glance at this collection, is one of amazement at its wealth and magnificence of ornament. No one could have imagined, *a priori*, that so much beauty, ele-

* The following is a list of Father Garrucci's earlier publications: *Les Mystères du Syncretisme Phrygien* (Paris, 1854); *Hagioglypta: sive picturæ et sculpturæ sacræ antiquiores, præsertim quæ Romæ reperiuntur, explicate a Johanne l'Heureux* (Macario, Paris, 1856); *Mélanges d'épigraphie Chrétienne* (Paris, 1856); *Il crocifisso grafito* (Roma, 1857); *Vetri ornati di figure in oro trovati nei cimiteri dei Christiani primitivi di Roma* (Roma, 1858, 2 Ediz., 1864); *Cimitero dei antichi Ebrei scoperto recentemente in Vigna Randanini* (Roma, 1862). There has lately appeared: *Sylloge inscriptionum Latinarum ævi Romanæ Reipublicæ usque ad C. Julium Cæsarem* (Taurini, 1875).

gance, and grace were to be found in these dark underground passages, extending for leagues in all directions. The magnificence of the Roman palaces has, so to speak, filtered down here, and invested the walls of this vast necropolis with the charms of new-born art. Not only are the walls adorned with symbolic figures, decorative designs, and sepulchral inscriptions, but the roof also bears traces of adornments we should scarcely seek save in the state-apartments of a Roman noble. Vine branches, laden with ripe clusters, are most gracefully intertwined on the surface of the calcareous tufa, enlivened by birds and winged genii fluttering among their tendrils. Elsewhere the roof is divided into several compartments, of which the central circle, or octagon, is surrounded with graceful festoons, or framed in a series of paintings, while garlands of flowers fill up the intervals between the several designs. In the collection before us we may meet with fifty such specimens, each presenting a marked variety of design and detail.

The larger portion of the sepulchral paintings, properly so called, are to be met with in the *arcosolia*, or semicircular niches over the tombs. We have here the same variety as in roof-paintings. In some cases the concavity of the *arcosolium* presents but one subject, in others it is divided into several compartments more or less decorated by festoons, or other paintings. On one *arcosolium* we find represented the family whose remains are entombed beneath it. The infant daughter, Nonnosa, with a graceful diadem and robe bedecked with pearls, is the central figure; on the left is her mother, Mary, in the usual garb of a matron; on the right, the father, Theotecnus, in the fulness of his manhood, bearded, and gracefully draped in his pallium; all have their hands stretched out in the attitude of prayer. On others we

behold the Virgin Mother with her child, or the Good Shepherd, by whom stands St. Paul, with the inscription, *Paulus pastor apostolus*, or St. Januarius, in the midst of two paying him their homage. One of the most finished specimens, which in conception and execution may vie with aught that Pompeii can show in the way of decorative art, represents Christ as a beardless youth in the midst of the twelve Apostles.

The *luminaria*, or vaults which admitted daylight through a shaft, are decorated with a profusion one could not have expected in this underground abode of Christian prayer and gloom. We may instance one in the Catacomb of Pretextatus, which is adorned throughout with the most elegant arabesques, while in the lower compartments the types of the four seasons remind one of the heavenly husbandman, who renews the face of the earth, and from her darksome bosom calls forth the fulness of life. Taken as a whole, these engravings bear witness to an artistic sense and living power of origination. Joy and love are everywhere the prevailing sentiments. One would seek here in vain for the cramped sympathies, the narrow views, the exaggerated terrors of a false asceticism.

As regards the categories into which the subjects treated in these pictures may be divided, we find no less than two-and-thirty Biblical allegories, not to speak of the strictly historical paintings which belong for the most part to a later age. The treatment of these allegories gives token of the same variety of form and conception. The story of Jonas recurs more than thirty times. It is presented in one, two, or three scenes, in which we are sure not to miss the stereotyped sea-monster, or the ivy, or gourd, yet ever with fresh combinations and variations. The same holds good of the other typical representations, as Moses striking

the rock, the raising of Lazarus, and the like.

As regards their artistic perfection, these paintings may be easily distributed among three distinct periods, the first of rudimentary attempt, followed by one of high finish, which in its turn was succeeded by a rapid degeneracy under the heirs of Constantine. Yet the student cannot fail to be impressed by the predominance throughout the collection of one unchangeable typical character. The central figure in these typical representations is the Good Shepherd, that moving presentment of the fundamental dogma of Christianity, the redemption of man by God made manifest in the flesh. The pencil of these ancient limners lingers fondly on a type expressive no less of the world-wide dominion of the Son of Man, than of His overflowing compassion for duped and enslaved humanity. For them it was not a cold allegory, but the loving delineation of a Divine utterance welling up from the Saviour's heart, recorded by the Apostle of love, foreshown by the Prophets, and filling the hearts of countless believers with gladness, hope, and the courage required for self-immolation.

The subjects of next importance to this, are the story of Jonas and the raising of Lazarus; those telling types of the resurrection of Christ, and of the members of His mystical body. Following close upon these, we have Daniel in the lions' den, the three holy youths in the fiery furnace, as a figure of Christ's Passion; the sacrifice of Abraham, the type of His all-atoning death; Moses striking the rock, foreshowing salvation by faith and Baptism; the multiplication of loaves and the mystic Supper, the symbol and presentment of the Eucharist. The Fall and our rehabilitation by repentance are typified by our first parents, and the man sick of the palsy; salvation in and by the

Church founded by Christ, is foreshadowed in Noe's ark; in a word, we find here, within a brief compass, the main articles of Catholic teaching. The desire expressed in the Tridentine Decree, that the pictorial and plastic arts should minister to the instruction of the faithful people, is thus seen to be in conformity with primitive practice, and to have been fully realized in the Catacombs.

Among the subjects which are less frequently met with, we have the mystic fisherman, the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, Tobias, Moses with the volume of the Covenant, the burning bush, Susanna, Elias's ascension, Job, the wise and foolish virgins, David with the sling, the healing of the man born blind, the manna, the unjust steward, the miraculous draught of fishes, the heavenly bride-chamber, the prize in the race-course, in fact, a complete "Bible of the poor" (*Biblia pauperum*), tastefully, yet simply illustrated with designs, of which, while some are merely ornamental, others veil a deep typical significance. Amid all these varieties, we never fail to meet with the picture of the female *Orans*, the veiled, praying woman, with hands outstretched, the symbol of the Church here below, breathing that heavenly piety which hallows the forms traced by Fra Angelico.

Another point which deserves attention is that, as Father Garrucci shows, the paintings on the ceilings, walls, and arcades, mostly (though not always) coalesce in what Father Garrucci has aptly named a homiletic, or catechetical whole. He illustrates his view by the mural paintings of the cemetery of Thraso a S. Saturnino, which are arranged in close succession on three distinct lines, as follows: Moses smiting the rock, Christ with the seven baskets (the multiplication of loaves), the three Magi in Persian costume bringing gifts to the Mother of God, who

with her Divine Child is seated on a throne, a man praying between two children, Noe with the dove returning to the ark, the mummy of Lazarus in a temple-shaped tomb, with Christ rousing him to a new life, Daniel standing naked between two lions, Tobias the younger about to take the fish at Raphael's command, and in a second scene dragging it out of the Tigris.

Let us hear how Father Garrucci blends these divers paintings into a harmonious whole. We are brought to Christ, the heaven-sent Bread of God,* by him who, smiting the rock, opens to us the mysteries of faith. The relation of the Epiphany to our knowledge of the God-Man, and the belief of the Gentiles in him, results from the connection indicated by Christ himself between the faith in himself and the mystic import of the multiplication of loaves, a connection which is in nowise incompatible with its sacramental significance. Further, the Magi travel to Bethlehem to find Christ, Tobias journeys to the banks of the Tigris to find the mystic "fish," which was food on the way, and a remedy for blindness. Christ gives his Body for the ransom of the world, and his sacrifice is figured by Daniel amid the lions. This series of dogmatico-sacramental truths quicken and foster in believers a steadfast hope in the peace and everlasting bliss to which they are called, and remind them of the crowning victory over death, in the resurrection of the body, both of which truths are here presented under the type of the ark and the raising of Lazarus. No less ingenious is his construction of the homily in pictures which he had discovered on the tomb of a consecrated virgin in the Cemetery of St. Cyriaca.

Among the paintings devoid of a typical purpose, we find the well-known head of Christ from St. Domitilla's, the favorite model of the masters of the *Renaissance*, and the

scarcely less beautiful one from St. Pontian's, where Christ is first depicted with a nimbus divided by a Greek cross. A third most interesting picture of the same kind is taken from the Neapolitan Catacomb of St. Gaudioso. We may next claim notice for a series of pictures of the Epiphany reaching back to the threshold of the Apostolic age, and valuable too, in that they show that, in the early Church, our Blessed Lady was held in highest veneration, the Madonna of St. Agnese and others, for which we must refer to Father Garrucci's collection.

In justice, however, to the third, or post-Constantinian period, which, as we have observed, was one of rapid decline, it must be acknowledged that many of its productions witness to a genuine love of art, to a certain taste and power of origination. There was never any real divorce between the Church and art, but she soon had to gird herself to the herculean task of building up a new civilization out of the ruins of the Roman Empire, and the chaos which followed the inroads of the barbarian hordes.

The second volume of the collection of engravings has already reached the number of thirty plates, and mainly consists of the oldest legendary portraits of Christ and his most Blessed Mother, of the most ancient series of the pictures of the Popes from St. Paul without the walls, and of several miniatures from biblical manuscripts. It is needless to say more until the volume is completed.

The letter-press which accompanies the engravings explains those elements which are not immediately obvious, as, the costume, attitude, action, the symbolism and connection of the figures. These explanations are not unfrequently borne out by quotations from the Fathers, from profane history, and by comparisons with other monuments; the author further enlarges on the criticism and

* St. John 6: 33.

history of the paintings, the defects or excellences of previous copies, the authenticity and value of the present editions, in all which we find abundant proof of the writer's varied reading and deep acquaintance with his subject. In his explanatory remarks, he takes his stand on the indications presented by the picture itself, or on the observation of contemporary writers; failing which he naturally does not neglect such considerations as may warrant well-grounded inferences as to the idea of the early Christian artists. Thus, for instance, a passage from Tertullian and another in the *Hexaëmeron* of Dracontius* enable him to explain a painting in which the Good Shepherd is represented with the emblems of the four seasons. He shows that they were taken as a symbol of the resurrection. We may hereby perceive how the appeal to history throws light on the poetic conception embodied in these emblematic paintings, and helps to an insight into the profound and devout intuitions of the early Christians.

The other part of the work, containing the history of art, is not sufficiently advanced to allow us to speak of its general plan, but from what has hitherto appeared, we may feel sure that no pains will be spared to render this department of the work as full and complete as the collection of prints we have heretofore been engaged with. We will, however, give a brief account of what is already published.

The first book, which might be called the "Prolegomena," treats of the "Character of Christian Art;" in connection wherewith it deals (1) with the historical beginnings and the dogmatic bases of Christian art; (2) with architecture considered as a necessary preliminary to the other arts; (3) with the theoretical and technical principles of painting and sculpture, so far as is needed to enable even "lay-

men," so to speak, to understand the work; (4) with the æsthetic theory or characteristic of Christian art in particular. These preliminary treatises are concise and clear and well suited to the purpose of an introduction.

It would be difficult to find anything excelling the three chapters on the ecclesiastical architecture of the first centuries; or to meet elsewhere with so many valuable details on the building of basilicas and baptisteries. The same may be said of the appended treatise on cemeteries. But we must pass on to the historic-dogmatic introduction, which may be summed up in the following theses: (1) Christian art, from the very outset, has had, under the influence of the Church, a universal and natural development, while between it and the early Church there was and could be no antagonism; (2) Protestant authorities have greatly exaggerated the aversion of the Jewish tradition from the use and veneration of images, and hence from Christian art; (3) the peril of idolatry was, on the whole, very slight for the converts from heathenism; for the early Christians were as well able as we, to distinguish between idolatry and the lawful veneration of images; (4) sculpture was not, as the modern Greek schismatics assert, forbidden by the Church or excluded from religious uses; the nature of the art and material difficulties are sufficient to account for its comparative rarity in the early centuries. These several points are discussed with great erudition; and the result effectually disposes of a theory current in some of the lower planes of Protestantism, and, while throwing light on the dogmatic bases of Christian art, refutes the false notion that it was smuggled into God's house, to the unspeakable displeasure of the converts from Judaism, and with no slight danger to the spiritual welfare of those of pagan antecedents.

Father Garrucci assigns as the two

* V. 623.

main distinctive features of Christian art, its return to the ideal of moral worth, and its typical and prophetic character, resulting from its central object, that is, revealed truth, and influencing its ideals and the form of their presentment. In consequence of the former characteristic, Christian art has entirely broken with the sensual lasciviousness of antiquity, and subordinated the elements of the beautiful, that address themselves to our senses, to the inner ideal, while regulating by the moral law the exercise of art. If it limited thereby the circle of its operations, the typico-prophetic character of the revelation of God spread before it a boundless horizon and opened to it an ocean of divine-human, and human-divine poetry. The Divine, the Eternal, the Supernatural are susceptible of a visible presentment, since the Word was made Flesh, and imparts to us of his fulness, by means of tangible signs; since mankind is bound together in the visible fellowship of the saints, and the course of our daily lives works out the fulfilment of that which was dimly foreshown in the signs and wonders of bygone ages, serves as an earnest of that which will overwhelm the heart of man with bliss in the bosom of undying love, of never-fading beauty.

This wondrous variety of types, the inexhaustible source at which Christian art draws its inspiration, has nought in common with heathen mythology, for the heathen apotheosis of man was a hideous lie, while the deification of man by Christianity is grounded on eternal truth. The types, allegories, personifications, symbols, etc., of Christian art are not, like those of its heathen counterpart, mere coinings of man's fancy; they are taken out of the revelation of God, and serve to clothe in visible shape Divine ideas, realities old yet ever new. It has been too much the fashion to ascribe the symbolism of the Catacombs to the

pressure of persecution, the discipline of the secret, the want of forms suited to the artistic rendering of the Christian idea, and to the influence of pagan art. Without wholly denying the influence of these several causes, Father Garrucci lays special stress on the typico-prophetic character of Revelation as the main source of the symbolism of early Christian art. According to the Apostle,* the Old Covenant throughout was a vast allegory of the salvation to be wrought by Christ. Christ himself spake in parables and similitudes: for him the Church is a building, a kingdom, a sheepfold; its chief visible Pastor a foundation-stone, or a bearer of the keys. What are the Sacraments, but a wondrous web of allegories, which, apart from their inward workings, invest our lives, from the cradle to the grave, with a heavenly poetry? The life of the individual, that of the Church itself, what is it but a foreshadowing of everlasting bliss and glory? The public worship of the Church is but a vast system of allegorical acts. Bearing in mind these facts, the utterances of the Fathers, the ecclesiastical liturgy, the Christian poetry of the early centuries, we must needs agree with Father Garrucci in assigning to Christian art, as its essential feature, the fundamental law of its development, the master-key to its enigmas, this typico-prophetic character. The correctness of this view is further established by the results of its concrete application to the monuments themselves; it affords a simple and natural explanation of many of the peculiarities of artistic expression, which can hardly be otherwise accounted for, while the pictorial series, apart from this typical or doctrinal sequence, would be an insoluble enigma. The two next chapters deal in detail with the peculiarities resulting from this special characteristic.

The Second Book of the *History*

* 1 Cor. 10: 11.

of Art treats of the representation of the human form, and may be resumed under the following heads: The representation of the nude; that of the ordinary draped figure; the vesture of Christ and his apostles; ecclesiastical vestments.

This much will suffice to give some notion of Father Garrucci's gigantic undertaking. We grieve to be compelled to say in conclusion that the material difficulties besetting his path render it likely that he may be unable to complete his work. The natural Mæcenas of Christian art, the second Damasus, as Pius the Ninth is deservedly styled, is now a prisoner in the Vatican; "regenerated" Italy has ends in view far other than the furtherance of Christian art and science. Catholic nations, groaning under the despotism of revolution, are cramped in every work of genuine Catholic tendency.

In this state of things they should deem it a point of honor to support a publication of this class, and to aid its circulation. Christian art lay hidden and ignored for centuries under the rubbish of the Catacombs, meanwhile, Protestantism has proclaimed that primitive Christianity eschewed all images. Rationalism has reproached the Church with the decay of classical taste; it may well, therefore, be hailed as a triumph when we behold the hitherto unappreciated and despised art, which owes to her its origin, rising from the Catacombs, resplendent with the sheen of classic beauty, to quicken within us the æsthetic conceptions and the religious enthusiasm of our forefathers in the faith, to nerve us to follow them in the path along which they advanced to victory over the world and over the powers to whom it has pledged its allegiance.

THE FIRST SISTER OF MERCY.

THE visitor who enters the parlor of any one of the numerous convents of the Sisters of Mercy, will probably soon find himself looking at a plain engraving of moderate size and no very high artistic merits, which is nearly sure to occupy the place of honor over the mantelpiece, or at least to be found somewhere in the room. It presents an elderly religious with an expression of frankness and benevolence upon her countenance, and her hand resting upon the open volume of the rule of the Order, at the chapter which speaks of charity. It is in some respects a provoking portrait; one of those indifferent pictures which just give the idea of their own insufficiency. It is clear that there was more in the face of

the person it portrays than the painter has been able to catch; and, in fact, we have an impression of having seen a better one on a smaller scale somewhere. But still it breathes simplicity, playfulness, charity, and patience; and there is also an air of quiet decision and shrewd commonsense, refined and elevated by unwonted gifts of faith and grace. So far it expresses well enough the character of her whose features it is meant to hand down to hundreds of her spiritual children who never saw her face—Catharine McAuley, the foundress of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy.

Her life is full of singular, though quiet, interest. It has been written by one of her own religious, with

much of that simplicity and inartistic plainness which characterizes the portrait of which we have spoken. Happily the book is sufficiently rich in detail, and dwells at some length on the life of Mother McAuley before the foundation of her first convent. She was then between forty and fifty years of age. These earlier years were in reality her preparation for the work to which she was unconsciously called—we say unconsciously, for up to the very last she had no idea of founding a religious order in the Church. Born in 1778, she was the daughter of a most excellent father—a man given with all his heart to charity and piety; one of a class of laymen to be found here and there in those days in Ireland, who were the providential instruments of keeping alive the faith in many souls besides their own. Notwithstanding the social disadvantages which then, to a far greater extent than at present, weighed upon all Catholic gentlemen who openly and zealously exerted themselves for religion, he was not only remarkable for his charities, but also for his endeavors to supply to some extent the dearth of priests in his part of the country, by assembling the poor of his neighborhood from time to time and giving them the best instruction he could. This excellent man, whose spirit was inherited by his daughter Catharine, died while she was quite a child, leaving two other children—another daughter and an infant son—to the care of his widow, a person by no means equal to him in her devotion to her religion. She removed to Dublin, and allowed Protestant influences to be brought to bear on the children, which ended in the disturbance of the faith of the two younger. Catharine, however, persevered; and she used to attribute the grace which enabled her to do so to the Sacrament of Confirmation, for which she made a devout and fervent preparation. Her own life was afterwards continually coming

back to her in the needs of those who were the objects of her work of mercy; and she has left her own diligent care in preparing children for confirmation as a special legacy to the sisters of her Order. She grew up a bright, affectionate, winning girl; with a special gift of comforting and cheering others, strong impulses to piety, a love of reading, and a great dislike for the usual amusements and enjoyments of young people like herself. She was about half-way through her teens when her mother died. The children fell into the hands of a Protestant friend, who brought them up well in other respects, but without the slightest attention to the religion to which they belonged. Those were days too in which Protestant families spent their conversation in nothing more commonly than in abuse of the Catholic Church. The boy, Catharine's brother, became a Protestant; her sister afterwards married a Protestant, and conformed to his religion. Catharine herself, unable to answer the statements and objections urged upon her without mercy, was in great trouble of mind; but she fell in the way of a man of much eminence in those days—Dr. Beytagh—who instructed and consoled her, lent her good books, and thus helped her to surmount the trial. She began again to listen to her impulses to devotion, though she was under so many restrictions in her new home as to make the frequentation of the Sacraments difficult to her. These restrictions, however, were but little in comparison to the disadvantages under which she was soon placed in this respect. At eighteen she was adopted, as their daughter, by a wealthy Protestant couple, who had no children of their own, and their house in the country, at a distance from any Catholic church, became from that time her home.

The years which intervene between eighteen and forty-four are in

most lives by far the most important part. No doubt the character is to a large extent formed before that time; but it is within that interval that the greater part of most careers is included; and the years of youth and supple growth are over soon after its beginning, and the lot and path in life of nine persons out of ten is irrevocably fixed between twenty and thirty. When we are within a few years of a half century of existence, it seems as if we could not change or turn ourselves to new habits of life and new pursuits, especially if they require greater restraint, more methodical exertion, and exact greater sacrifices from our liberty. Hence it is a rare case for "postulants" to be received in religious orders after forty or even thirty-five. The character is then too far fixed and pronounced to bend and mould itself easily to the requirements of discipline and a life in community. Most people will remain for the rest of their lives what they have been between eighteen and forty-four. And yet it seems as if there were certain special classes of work in the world and in the Church that are often best begun by people of mature age. The "late-flowering" plants are not the least beautiful or the least robust. Lord Macaulay has remarked somewhere on the number of great literary productions which have not been begun till after the eighth lustre. Some of our most successful statesmen and generals have been comparatively unknown till they were past their prime; though Wellington's military career was over before it, and Napoleon was his contemporary. In great spiritual works it is the same. St. Teresa was some years past forty when she began her reform; St. Ignatius was not "converted" till he was thirty, and it was many years later that he laid the foundations of his society. In our own century, many of the religious institutions which are now most flourishing and

most useful have been founded by persons who have undergone a long previous training in secular life. There is, no doubt, a certain disadvantage in every such new work, from the want of experience and training in the details of religious life on the part of its first members; but it is compensated for by a certain authority and firmness of character which deals more happily with difficulties and opposition from without than could be expected in the case of a set of young persons; and there is often a peculiar grace given to the beginners of such undertakings which fits them for their office as well as if they had inherited the traditions of centuries and spent a long life in obedience before they were called on to command. Catharine McAuley spent no less than twenty-two years of her life in her new home at a distance from a church, with very scanty liberty to approach the Sacraments, and under the imperative necessity of hiding in every way even the less obnoxious parts of her religion. It was a life that would ordinarily be hardly recommended, perhaps hardly permitted to a Catholic under her circumstances. Yet we find her at the end of the time admirably trained to begin her great work in the Church, not only by the constant practice of humility, patience, charity, and sweetness, which those years had imposed on her, but with a great amount of actual experience as to the mode of dealing with the miseries she was to provide for. The ample fortune left to her by her adopted parents was but the least of her qualifications for the beginning of the work of mercy.

Mr. and Mrs. O'Callaghan of Coolock House, who had thus taken Catharine for their child, gave her full liberty in everything but her religion. But she used her new position for the benefit of the poor. She went into society as much as she was obliged, and no more; but for miles

round she was known as the angel of comfort and relief to the sick and needy. She seems to have been often quite unable to get to Mass herself. The church was too far for her to walk, and her friends could not send her in their carriage. She could not even keep a crucifix or a pious picture; but she knelt with a Catholic servant before the cross made by the partitions of the doors, and found the holy emblem in the branches of the trees. She managed to practice some mortifications, especially that which she continued all her life,—to eat and drink nothing from Holy Thursday till Easter-eve. She prayed very much; and the poor repaid her charities by fervent prayers, for they knew her faith, and the difficulties she had in practicing what it required. Things went on in this way for some time—we are not told how long—then she was able to get to the Sacraments secretly, during some shopping visits to Dublin; and by the advice of her confessor, she took courage to petition for greater religious liberty, which Mr. and Mrs. O'Callaghan did not refuse.

She was, in fact, to be the means of their conversion. Her character was perfectly radiant with the light of grace and faith, though she said nothing, and her influence gained an ascendancy of which they were unconscious. Mrs. O'Callaghan fell ill, and lingered long. Then Catharine was able to win her to consider the Catholic faith, which she had already pressed on her in daily life by the most efficacious of all arguments—a saintly example. The fear of displeasing her husband was the last hindrance to be overcome. She thought, moreover, that her conversion would induce him at once to dismiss Catharine from his home. Catharine implored her not to hesitate on her account, and managed to introduce a priest while Mr. O'Callaghan was absent. Mrs. O'Callaghan died almost immediately

after her reconciliation to the Church.

Catharine's position was not changed by the death of her adopted mother. Mr. O'Callaghan trusted her entirely; and she was now able to resume her active works of mercy among the poor. The experience she thus acquired was the source from which she afterwards drew largely; and she then composed the substance of what is still the manual used by the Sisters of Mercy in their visits to the sick. After some time—the good Sister whose work lies before us is rather careless about dates—Mr. O'Callaghan came to be confined to the house, and at last to his bed. This was the opportunity for which Catharine had so long prayed. She tended him with the utmost sweetness and affection, speaking to him of common religious subjects without mentioning matters of controversy. At last he began to inquire about her faith, but, as it seems, at first without the slightest misgivings as to his own belief. One morning she knelt by his bedside and burst into tears. She had been told by the physician that his state was extremely uncertain; and her confessor had exhorted her not to let another day pass without urging on Mr. O'Callaghan the danger of his soul. She was unable to speak till he asked her to tell him whether he was in danger of death. She told him the truth; and then spoke of religion. He said he had no doubts as to the religion which he had always professed, and had endeavored to serve God uprightly in it. Still she insisted; and he consented to receive the visit of the priest, who, after a short time, received him into the Catholic Church. His death left Catharine the sole heiress of a large property, at the age, as we have said, of forty-four.

The circumstances of her life had cut her off from any large circle of Catholic acquaintance. Her chief adviser was the good priest, Mr. Armstrong, who had reconciled Mr.

O'Callaghan on his deathbed. Catharine looked upon the fortune of which she was now the possessor as a trust placed in her hands by Providence; and she determined to spend it entirely in the service of God and of the poor. Her own experience suggested the kind of misery which it should be devoted to relieve. Ignorant children, in danger of being badly brought up, or losing their father; servants out of place; persons of good character without a home; and the sick and dying, in need of comfort and spiritual assistance—these she had already frequently come across, and desired to help more than had then been in her power. One day, at a later time than this, she had seen an orphan child turned out of one of the cellars in which the poorest of the poor live; its parents had lately died, and the cellar had been let to another family. From that time dated her devotion to the relief of orphans—taken up as it has so nobly been by her spiritual children. The “Houses of Refuge” had their origin in her mind in a sadder tale. Before the death of Mr. O'Callaghan, she met with a foolish girl of good character whose imprudence had exposed her to great danger of ruin. She sought at once to place her in the established House of Refuge in Dublin; but it was one of those institutions governed by boards and committees; and the poor girl was lost before the regular machinery for admitting her could be put in motion. Her first idea as to the use of her fortune was to provide some permanent establishment for such cases as hers, and for the education of children. She bought at a very high price, the ground on which the present convent in Baggot Street stands; and the first stone of her building was laid in July, 1824. It was more than a year and a half after the death of Mr. O'Callaghan. She had but little definite plan as to the requirements of her building. The architect gave it

a conventual character and arrangement; but she had merely required large school-rooms and dormitories, a room that might serve as a chapel, and some accommodation for ladies who might undertake to help in the work which she hoped to found. We see thus that the work of mercy, in her mind, preceded the design of a religious order devoted to it. It was not, in fact, till some years after the work had been begun that a religious rule was adopted by Catharine and her assistants, and even then it was more as a matter of necessity than as a part of the original design. The account of the gradual progress and extension of the work begun in this simple manner is very interesting; but we should exceed our limits if we were to dwell on it in detail.

Catharine's building was not completed till after three years from its beginning. In the meantime she resided with her married sister, who as has been already said, had conformed to the Protestantism of her husband, and brought up her children in the same religion. Catharine devoted herself, as usual, to works of mercy, teaching children in the schools, and visiting the sick. There is a touching story at this part of her life of the care which she lavished upon a poor maniac who had formerly been in good circumstances. Meanwhile her prayers and silent influence were doing their work. Her sister's health was rapidly failing, and she determined to return to the Church. She managed to remove to Dundrum for change of air, and was there reconciled without her husband's knowledge, exhorting her eldest daughter, who was with her, to follow her example as soon as she could. She soon after died. Catharine continued to live with her brother-in-law, and her niece soon attached herself entirely to her. A chance conversation on the subject of her influence over his children revealed to the father that his wife had died a Catholic. He was in such

a paroxysm of fury at the news, that it seems as if her sudden flight from the house alone saved him from killing his sister-in-law in his passion. She continued, however, to reside with him after this, and her niece was ultimately received into the Church, and became one of the earliest postulants of the Order of Mercy.

Meanwhile the building in Baggot Street was nearly completed, and was opened on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, 1827. The schools were served, and the young women admitted into the "House of Mercy," as it was then called, were watched over by pious ladies, who had volunteered to assist Catharine in her good work. Two of them lived in the house. Catharine herself still resided with her brother-in-law. The residents wore a semi-religious dress, and practiced many austerities. Gradually other ladies joined in the work of instruction in the schools, which soon numbered about three hundred children. The inmates of the House of Mercy were not at first occupied during the day within its walls; they went out to work every morning after prayers and instruction, and returned at night. A few orphans, wholly provided for, lived in the house from the first. In 1828 Dr. Armstrong, who had all through been Catharine's great adviser and supporter, died. It was just at the time when, as it seemed, he was most necessary for the protection of the work, for which he had hitherto secured the countenance of the Archbishop of Dublin. The new institute was beginning to attract attention, and, of course, opposition. Still all went on well for a time. In the course of the autumn the Archbishop allowed the house to be called after Our Lady of Mercy, and towards the close of the year the associates received leave to visit the sick. Not being religious, and presenting themselves as simple ladies, they even obtained entrance into

some of the hospitals of the city. Early in the following year (1829), Dr. McAuley, Catharine's brother-in-law, died, and she took up her own abode in the house in Baggot Street, accompanied by her niece. Her residence there, where she was at once recognized as a kind of superior, led to the introduction of a regular *horarium*; and the little company of ladies, who all dressed in the same plain habit, and called each other Sister, assumed very much to outward appearance the guise of a religious community. In the course of the summer the chapel was finished, and arranged so as to be open to the public, as there was then no church in the neighborhood. A chaplain was appointed, and the confessors came to hear confessions in the chapel. By the middle of 1830 the number of "Sisters" had increased to twelve.

It could not be denied that what was practically and in all externals a religious community had risen up no one exactly knew how. It was drawing to itself ladies who might otherwise have entered religious orders; and its work, it was supposed, might interfere with that of the Sisters of Charity already established in Dublin. It is not at all surprising that so anomalous a state of things should have seemed objectionable to many, as it was, in fact, hardly in accordance with the strict rules by which the Church regulates the formation of such bodies. Some rather high-flown praises of Catharine, from the mouth of the priest who preached the sermon on the occasion of the dedication of the chapel, seem first to have kindled the smouldering opposition into an open flame. The Archbishop was at last appealed to, and he admitted the many inconveniences of the existence of a practically religious body which was bound by no authorized rule. His expressions were, however, exaggerated; and the tidings flew to Catharine's

ears that he intended to hand the institution over to the Sisters of Charity. It gave her an opportunity of showing how deeply grounded she was in humility, obedience, and detachment; how pure had been her intention in the work which had absorbed all her care as well as all her fortune. She quietly turned to her informant, and said that she would yield to whatever the Archbishop decided; and then immediately wrote to his grace to the same effect. The result was such as might have been expected: he disclaimed the intention imputed to him; but after some negotiation he decided that the ladies attached to the house must either drop the appearance of a religious profession, or submit themselves to the realities of rules and vows. This decision was the real foundation of the Order of the Sisters of Mercy; the associates chose to become really religious. The rules of several orders were consulted and studied; offers of affiliation to the Carmelites and Poor Clares were declined; and at last the rule of the Order of the Presentation—an order of Irish origin—was chosen as that by which the new institute should be governed, with certain modifications rendered necessary by the peculiar object of the Sisters of Mercy. It was arranged that Catharine, with two other ladies, should make a novitiate in the Presentation Convent, George's Hill. Meanwhile application was made to the Holy See for the faculties necessary for the establishment of the new order.

When we consider that Catharine was at this time fifty-two years of age; that she had spent the greater part of her life in affluence, and without any other restraint on her inclinations than was imposed by her adopted parents, both devotedly fond of her; and that since Mr. O'Callaghan's death, eight years before, she had been her own absolute mistress, and recognized, moreover, as

a superior by the ladies whom she had gathered round her,—we may be able to some extent to understand how great a trial it would have been to her to become all at once a novice and a subject, if the foundations of spiritual perfection had not already been deeply and securely laid in her heart. The Sisters of Mercy date the beginning of their institute from the day of her profession, December 12th, 1831. It is not merely that from that time the Order became really established, and its members subject to rule. Her year of novitiate—though in many respects, no doubt, she did not require many of the lessons that were then taught her—was her real qualification for the work of a foundress and a superior. Works of that kind have sometimes been undertaken by persons who have shown but too conspicuously the danger of beginning to teach what they have not first practiced themselves. These failures reach far beyond the persons whose characters they immediately affect. Or, let us rather say, the humility and docility practiced by persons in the position of Catharine McAuley, and the thoroughly religious spirit in which their souls are, as it were, steeped by means of such a novitiate as hers, last on beyond their lives as heir-looms and traditional instincts in the bodies of which they have been the first superiors. No one can impart to others what he has not received; no stream can mount higher than its source. The Institute of the Sisters of Mercy has not yet been in existence for forty years, yet its convents generally seem haunted by the traditions of a long line of saints; and, with all the constant intercourse with the external world which is imposed on their inmates by their laborious works of charity, they breathe an air of peace and recollection which seems like the inheritance of many generations of cloister-life. This, the most precious of all gifts to religious communities,

they owe, under Providence, to the wise humility of their first Mother, which made her not merely submit to her novitiate as a necessity, but welcome it and profit by it in the spirit of a child. Persons called to works like hers have, to a striking degree, the gift of impressing their own character on those around them, and thus creating in a short time what afterwards becomes a living tradition. In her case, perhaps, the individual character has not so much perpetuated itself as that of the Sister of Mercy—gentle, patient, hard-working, humble, obedient, charitable, and, above all, simple and joyous.

Her novitiate was not at all free from trials. The mistress of novices took great pains to humble her, often reproving her severely before others. Her cheerfulness and gayety were very great; so much so, as at times to appear even excessive. Then there were troubles reported from Baggot Street, where the remaining "Sisters" were not quite able to manage one another without her. Some of them took occasion from her absence to give themselves to excesses of mortification, or to work too hard for their strength. One very promising member of the little community died; two others—one of whom was Catharine's niece—fell dangerously ill, but rallied for a time. Then there were some difficulties about the profession of the three postulants, as they were not to remain in the Order of the Presentation. Catharine was in great anxiety, and had recourse, as usual, to earnest prayer. At last all obstacles were overcome, and she, with her two companions, pronounced their vows in the Presentation Convent, with a clause stipulating that the rule of that Order was in their case to be subject to any changes which might be necessary for the new Institute of Mercy.

The story of the remaining years of the life of Catharine McAuley is

in a great measure the history of the progress of the Order of which she had, almost unwittingly, become the foundress. There is a wonderful simplicity and absence of design about the gradual growth of an institute which, having first started in 1831, has now, after an existence of thirty-five years, between 150 and 200 houses in almost every part of the world where the English language is spoken. Its first progress was, of course, in Ireland; but it soon crossed St. George's Channel (Bermondsey being the first English foundation); and was not long in fixing itself firmly in the United States and the British North American provinces. It is to be found in California, in Australia, in Brazil, and in New Zealand; it has confronted, in its mission of mercy, the great scourge of our time, the cholera; and its habit was seen side by side with that of the children of St. Vincent of Paul in the care of the hospitals in the Crimean war. It does not appear that this world-wide extension was at all contemplated by Mother McAuley when she began. The reality of her work, and the blessing of Heaven upon it, has been manifested by another far more precious sign than that of material progress; for the Sisters of Mercy have carried with them to the most distant lands, and have displayed under the most varied and difficult circumstances, the thoroughly religious spirit which animated their first mother. Having been originated entirely at the suggestion of the Archbishop, the first house was of course dependent on him; and there never seems to have been any desire in the Order to exempt its houses from the jurisdiction of the ordinary prelate. Thus it is essentially a diocesan institution; and indeed there is no necessary connection, save that of charity, between separate convents in the same diocese, except in the case of what are called branch-houses, the as yet incomplete off-

shoots from some particular convent. Each convent, when fully formed, has to provide itself with its superiors, who are not allowed to remain permanently in office, its mistress of novices, and other officials. There are no "provinces" of the Order; no authorities higher than the superiors of the several convents, who are immediately under the rule of the bishop in whose diocese they are settled. It is not improbable that the spirit of the institute is opposed to any more complete organization of the Order as a whole; and many of the causes which make such arrangements desirable in other cases do not exist in that of the Sisters of Mercy. The few years during which Mother McAuley lived after her religious profession—about ten—did not, at all events, give time for further developments in this direction.

Gradually, as occasion arose, one feature after another was added to the original plan of her House of Mercy in Dublin. At first there were no lay sisters; but after a short time she was touched by the needs of the class of young women from which they are recruited; and her convent had every reason to be grateful for their introduction. Then came a call from the populous parish of Kingstown—in great want of the many services which the sisters were rendering in Dublin; and in this way the first branch-house was formed in 1834. It was not till a year later that the formal approval of the new institute was obtained from Rome. Up to that time the sisters had been simply a creation of the Archbishop's, who had, of course, obtained the necessary powers to begin the work. The first convent, after that in Baggot Street, was founded at Tullamore in 1836. The same year saw the second foundation at Charleville; Carlow and Cork followed in 1837. Each of these convents became the mother-houses of numerous colonies. Bermondsey—the oldest house in England—was founded from Cork in

1839; some English ladies having passed their novitiate there in order to learn the rules and catch the spirit of the Order. Birmingham—or, as it should now be called, Handsworth—was founded in the same way, in 1841, from Dublin; several English postulants having been previously trained at Baggot Street. It was the last foundation made by Mother McAuley herself, as she died a short time after its completion. Each of these two houses has sent out numerous swarms to other places; but the call for the Sisters of Mercy in this country has been far too great for them to supply, and a considerable number of houses have been founded from Ireland. Other religious orders have sprung up in the present century on the same soil, so fruitful in everything that is Christian and Catholic; but none have developed so rapidly or spread themselves so widely as the Sisters of Mercy. The reason is obvious enough, in the great needs that call everywhere for work such as theirs. As St. Francis de Sales is reported to have said that a community of Capuchins would find a living anywhere, we may say of the Sisters of Mercy that they find work wherever they may be planted; for their vocation calls them wherever there is ignorance, poverty, sickness, and misery. A peculiar feature of their institute—which is probably to be accounted for by the derivation of their rule from that of the elder Order of the Presentation—consists in the amount of what may be called cloister and community duties, which they combine with their active employments. Thus they have to recite the Office of the Blessed Virgin every day, and have other calls on their time of the same kind. In this, as in their longer novitiate, their perpetual vows, their diocesan constitution, and notably in the character of their spiritual exercises, they differ very widely from the Sisters of Charity, with whom they were at

one time accused of interfering. Of all religious orders whose members are not only not cloistered by obligation, but may ordinarily spend many hours of the day outside their convent in school teaching or in visiting the sick, they are probably the most frequently recalled to the choir, and the most abundantly supplied with practices that secure recollection and defend the interior life. They are thus enabled to bear the really hard, and often very thankless work imposed upon them by their charity.

The simple memoir from which we have drawn the materials for this sketch of the life of the first Sister of Mercy is full of interesting recollections which illustrate her character during this last stage of her career on earth. Charity was her favorite virtue; and we are told that towards the close of her life she was able to say of her religious sisters, that the sun had never gone down on the anger of any, and that there never had been a breach of charity among them. She could not possibly have said anything more significant of the solid perfection to which she had trained them. She was herself a pattern of condescension and humility. Though the superior and mother of all, she did whatever she was asked, as to tell a story or sing in recreation for the amusement of the rest. She seldom reproved severely. Once, after having done so, her conscience smote her with the thought that she had spoken too strongly; she sent for the sister, and begged her to bring with her all that had been present when the reproof was given, and then, when they were all assembled, knelt down at her feet and asked her forgiveness. She was always perfectly serene and cheerful, even under the gravest external trials; and when her last surviving niece died, in the middle of one of the convent-recreations, she went on attending at all the exercises as if nothing had hap-

pened. Never, under any trial or care, did she let a trace of vexation or sadness appear in her countenance or demeanor at the ordinary recreation; her cheerfulness and winning playfulness were always the same. One so penetrated with charity could not but be deeply grounded in humility. She thought so little of her own importance in the work of establishing the Order, that at the time when everything was beginning to prosper, after the early difficulties had been overcome, she offered to go and found a community in Nova Scotia, and to remain there herself. Her love of mortification was great; and her biographer mentions several exercises of that virtue which she habitually practiced. Her devotion was deep, tender, and very simple; her favorite prayers were such as the Litany and Psalter of Jesus, and the Thirty-Days' Prayer.

It is easy to see that a person of such a character must have made herself intensely beloved by her religious children and companions. At the time of her death, in 1841, there were but fourteen houses of the Order in existence, and all of these but the two English foundations were in Ireland. She was therefore personally known to almost the whole Order. Her death was not sudden, and she had for some time before, as it seems, been aware of its approach. She had, up to that date, had a great fear of dying, which was now, as is often the case, changed for a most perfect serenity and courage. But her loss was unexpected by her children, who could not persuade themselves that she was in danger. She, in fact, returned from the foundation of the Birmingham convent, in the autumn of 1841, only to prepare to die. "For the last six months," writes one of the sisters present at her death, "she was herself well aware that she was dying; and since her return from Birmingham she cautiously avoided

anything like business. It is only by her acts that we can judge her mind. She was perfectly silent as to what she thought; arranged all her papers about a month or six weeks before, and said to Sister Teresa, on leaving the parlor, '*Now they are ready.*' About four on Thursday she desired the bed to be moved to the centre of the room, saying that she would soon want air. About seven she desired the sisters to be brought to her; said to each one individually what was most suited to her; but her first and last injunction to all was to preserve union and peace with each other; that if they did, they would have great happiness, such as to make them wonder whence it came; told Sister Genevieve particularly (a venerable sister, who entered Baggot Street in 1833 at the advanced age of fifty-three) that she felt exceedingly happy, as if to encourage her to die. She recognized all; told little Sister Mary Camillus (her god-child Teresa) to kiss her and go away, that she would see her again. She sought thus to prevent her from weeping. The Holy Sacrifice was offered in the room at about half-past eight. . . . I think her agony commenced about eleven o'clock. She spoke very little. . . . About five in the evening she asked for the candle to be placed in her hand; we then commenced the last prayers. I repeated one or two that she herself had taught me. She said with energy, 'May God bless you.' When we thought the senses were going, and that it might be well to rouse attention by praying a little louder, she said: 'No occasion, my darling, to speak so loud; I hear distinctly.' In this way she continued till ten minutes before eight o'clock, when she calmly breathed her last. I did not think it was possible for human nature to have such self-possession at the awful moment of death."

The character of Catharine Mc-

Auley, as handed down by memory, and preserved in the artless and humble biography on which we have been drawing, is the most precious legacy that her children can inherit from her. Its chief strength seems to lie in its simplicity. It was this that probably preserved her through the trials to which her faith was exposed during her younger years, and kept her from being chilled and hardened while, for so long a period of her life, she was unable to practice her religion except in mere necessities, and was hardly allowed to make any open profession of it. Yet we find her, after she had passed forty, able to begin the work of mercy with which her name will now be connected forever. What is still more remarkable is the pliancy and gentleness with which she allowed herself and her work to be moulded and directed by authority, without claiming any rights or dictating any conditions on the ground of the large fortune which she brought with her to the undertaking. It is to such characters that great providential works are often intrusted; and we often find them, as in her case, led on step by step without knowing whither they were going, because they have the privileges of the true children of him who bids us take no thought for the morrow, and depend on his fatherly guidance with absolute confidence and perfect docility. Without knowing it they find that they have established some institution which is to shine brightly in the annals of the Church; and have been used to give an impulse to some movement which swells into a mighty stream by gathering into itself the charitable yearnings of thousands of hearts. The history of the foundation of religious orders is frequently the same. A need exists; and up and down the Christian community there are a number of souls prepared by the instincts of charity and zeal to work for its supply. At one time they are waiting for the call of Dom-

inic, at another for that of Ignatius, to enrol themselves into a sacred army for the defence of the truth; or Francis is to raise for them the standard of gospel poverty, or John de Matha and Felix de Valois to invite them to a crusade of mercy for the rescue of Christian captives. The bond of religious charity must knit them together; they must vow themselves to the following out of the evangelical counsels, and then the great work will be carried on, by the blessing of God, from generation to generation. The instruments chosen by Heaven for the beginning of such undertakings are often quite unconscious of the designs of Providence. St. Francis of Assisi little understood his first call; the plan of St. Ignatius, though conceived so long before its execution, grew upon him, and the original scheme of preaching in the Holy Land was abandoned; St. Francis de Sales meant to institute an active order—much like what the Sisters of Mercy were to be afterwards—and found himself, in reality, the father of a glorious race of cloistered religious. The simple-hearted foundress of the Sisters of Mercy was led to her work by the most ordi-

nary method of providential guidance, that of ecclesiastical authority; but neither to the Archbishop nor to herself was the religious character of the institution anything but an afterthought. Here, again, was a great call on her simple docility, which enabled her to adapt herself to a novitiate, to embrace a rule not made for work such as hers, and to carry on her Order to its complete establishment with an organization that had, as it were, to be supplied piecemeal.

The Order seems at present to be quite in the state in which she left it, both as to the spirit that animates it and the work which it undertakes. Wherever we have had the pleasure of knowing them, whether in large or small convents, whether popular and successful or laboring under disappointment and difficulty, the Sisters of Mercy uniformly bear the deeply religious character stamped on them at their beginning, and their demeanor breathes the quiet peace, unaffected charity, and humble simplicity which marks them as the true children of their venerated and beloved foundress.

“MAN, know thyself!” All wisdom centres there,
 To none man seems ignoble but to man.
 Angels that grandeur men o’erlook admire;
 How long shall human nature be their book,
 Degenerate mortal, and unread by thee!
 The beam dim Reason sheds shows wonders there;
 What high contents, illustrious faculties!
 But the grand comment, which displays at full
 Our human height scarce severed from Divine,
 By Heaven composed, was published on the Cross.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE condition of Catholicity in Turkey is attracting much attention. A European contemporary writes of it as follows :

"It is but natural that the Church should watch with peculiar interest over these lands, full of the most sacred reminiscences. She cannot forget either the hills of Judea or the Isle of Patmos, or the great names of Antioch, of Smyrna, or of Ephesus, which filled the annals of the Church in the first centuries. The apostasy of eighteen hundred years has not weakened her hopes. In the Levant especially the Lazarists, supported by France and Austria, have pushed forward their missionary work with considerable success. The schools which they, together with the Jesuits and the Franciscans, have founded, contribute largely to their beneficent influence. The necessity for a regular system of education for their children is recognized now by the followers of Islam, and such an education is only to be obtained in the Christian schools. To the mild teaching of Christianity, and to its influence over the minds of the young, it is hoped that the fierce spirit of Mussulman fanaticism must eventually yield. In the Apostolic Vicariate of Aleppo the Capuchins have established an excellent school; the Sisters of Mercy are carrying on the work of education with great success in Smyrna, whilst in Syria the Jesuits have founded many missionary stations. The reunion of several of the Oriental sects with the Church is proceeding quietly and without exciting much attention. But the work of conversion is often frustrated by the intrigues of the schismatic leaders, as well as by the fanaticism of the Turkish officials. Jealousy of the influence of the Catholic Church outweighs considerations of policy, not to speak of patriotism; for even Protestant writers acknowledge the superiority of the education imparted in Catholic schools, and the higher degree of civilization obtained by those Oriental sects who have returned to Catholic unity."

PREACHING in aid of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Father Trainor said: "Beginning with St. Patrick and Boniface, and Xavier, who brought millions of heathen into the faith, the Catholic Church has through all the centuries been the great agency for converting the heathen. Under Protestant auspices it costs

several thousand dollars per head to make converts to Protestantism, because of the many expenses attending the missionary himself. He has his wife and family, and must have his bank account. The priest receives an order from his superior, starts out with a little bundle, with a few pictures, crucifixes, rosaries, etc., and lives as best he can after his pocket-money has given out. The Methodists, the other day, met and decreed \$500,000 for foreign missions for 1877. That was only one sect. Fifty years ago a very few persons assembled and formed the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. To-day this Society supports thousands of missionaries. The little mustard-seed that was planted then has grown to be the great tree with branches spreading over China and Japan, India and Australia, and away to the wilds of the American frontier. And how had this been fostered? By the weekly subscription of one cent from every Catholic. There are in New York 400,000 Catholics, and if only 100,000 subscribed during the year, \$52,000 would be contributed towards the conversion of the poor heathen and infidel." After the benediction the vast congregation dispersed.

It is impossible for any thoughtful man, we care not if he is Democrat or Republican, not to see that the present condition of affairs is one that brings to a focus and shows plainly to view the dangers and difficulties of administering a republican form of government. As the late President Lincoln expressed it, "it is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." For its successful administration it necessitates an intelligent, a patriotic, and a religious people. It requires an intelligent people, because without intelligence a correct judgment is impossible to be formed on questions as they exist. It requires a patriotic people, because it is often necessary to sink differences of opinions on minor matters in obedience to the interests of the country. It requires a religious people, because without religious or moral principles communities become corrupt, self-interest rules all, and the people become the prey of demagogues and schemers. We believe, also, that a certain equality in riches and possessions (as far as is possible in human society) also contributes greatly to the successful administration of a republic.

Now, what are the most prominent peculiarities of the United States? First, a vast territory peopled by diverse races following a variety of pursuits. Secondly, a rapid increase of wealth, which tends to accumulate in few hands. Thirdly, an extensive system of secular education.

THE relations of Catholic Societies to the Church are occupying a good deal of attention lately, and as the following extract from a pastoral lately issued by the Right Rev. Bishop Ryan of Buffalo contains very good rules, it deserves a wide knowledge. These societies, whether Temperance, Beneficial, or Literary, are becoming numerous, and as they may and do exercise influence, the conditions on which they are recognized are very important to be known.

"These various organizations may be a tower of strength to the Church, of immense advantage to the local pastor, and the congregations to which they are attached, a mutual support, encouragement, and edification to their own members, provided always a good spirit animate them, and they be Catholic in deed and in truth. To secure this most desirable consummation and avoid all occasion of possible misunderstandings, we deem it most useful, if not indeed absolutely necessary, to define the relations of Catholic Societies to the Church and determine the conditions on which societies in our diocese may be recognized as Catholic. Their objects must be such as the Church indorses and approves, and to insure this, their constitution and by-laws must be submitted for approval to the Ordinary of the diocese. The society and its members must recognize the jurisdiction as well of the bishop of the diocese as of their immediate pastor, and in everything that concerns their spiritual interests be subject to their authority, and we constitute the local pastor, moderator, or spiritual director of every society established in his parish. All the members of a Catholic society must be practical Catholics, and it is the pastor's right and duty whenever any doubt or question on this score arises, either in regard to candidates for membership or members, to determine the point, and to veto the admission of the one and to demand the expulsion of the other, whenever such candidates or members have forfeited their title to the name of Catholic, and have cut themselves off from communion with their Church by neglect of their Easter duty, or by joining a secret, forbidden society. Though the pastor may not intrude in the business matters of the society or meddle with temporal and financial affairs, as our delegate, he shall have the right to assist at all meetings and the election of officers, and shall have access to the books

and archives of the society, whenever it may be necessary or useful. Henceforth no Catholic society can have a fair, picnic, excursion, etc., without the previous permission of the local pastor, and through the pastor of the bishop, and we take this occasion to notify all concerned, that under no consideration will we grant permission to hold anything of this kind on a Sunday or holiday of obligation."

WE observed lately that at a meeting of a Sodality in Limerick an address was delivered, in which the Rector of the College of Limerick said:

"Amongst the difficulties of our position as Catholics in these countries, the absence of a Catholic scientific literature and Catholic scientific press is one of the foremost. The result of this privation is that we are flooded with writings from the pens of men, highly educated and singularly gifted, but alien to the one true Church, and often, alas, bitter enemies of God himself and of his Christ. Now there is great danger that many wrong ideas on subjects of the highest moment, conveyed through publications of great attractiveness, should make their way, either openly or covertly, into our very homes. You have reason, then, to be upon your guard. You have to fortify yourselves in the knowledge of the truth, that setting it side by side with error, you may be able to discern the tares which the enemy has sown from the good wheat which alone springs up to have life temporal as well as eternal. Our friends of the medical profession will not, I am sure, object to my taking an illustration from their department of science. They, I think, will bear me out in the statement that he who visits an infectious case with safety to himself must be in good health and must have the strength which results from taking a sufficient quantity of nourishing food. And how can we with impunity breathe the poison of error with which the air is impregnated if we are not strengthened against it?"

"We propose to help you to the best of our power to counteract the evil influences which beset you as Catholics, by special instructions, suited, as we may judge, to your position. The spirit of our instructions will not be combative and controversial in the main, though they will tend to the refutation of error in the best of all ways, by the direct exposition of truth. Error is manifold, and it would be a waste of time to pursue falsehoods which, if left to themselves, are often mutually self-destructive, but truth is one, and its single light is enough to chase away the darkness of error. The late Cardinal Wiseman, who took such a prominent part in the great Oxford movement, which brought

so many into the Church, made it a rule not to enter into controversy with any of those who applied to him. He gave to each one a Catechism, and asked him to read it over attentively, and then to return to him. And he found that the simple explanation of Catholic doctrine answered all objections to the satisfaction of every sincere inquirer. And the celebrated Father Lacordaire, who was so long engaged in combating error in the France of this century, has left it on record that he had been very little engaged in controversy, being convinced that the direct exposition of Catholic truth ruins beforehand all the objections brought against it. Catholicity, he goes on to say, 'is like an old monument with deep and solid foundations, and controversy is like the sand driven against that indestructible mass by the wind.'

IN the year 1452 the Turks under Mahomet II captured Constantinople and extinguished the Empire of the East, which had existed for a thousand years under the Greek emperors. It is the fashion with certain historians to sneer at "priestly government," yet the statesmanship of a St. Dunstan in England, and of Cardinals Wolsey, Ximenes, and Richelieu has been vindicated by the ablest modern historians, and the present condition of Eastern Europe is entirely owing to the neglect with which the Pope's exhortations met with four centuries ago.

Pope Nicholas V endeavored to arouse the European nations to a sense of their danger, and to unite them against the common foe. His successor, Callixtus III, sent as legate St. John Capristan, who roused the Hungarians under Hunniades to resist the Turks, who by that time had advanced to Belgrade, now the capital of Servia. Mahomet II attacked that city with one hundred and fifty thousand men, and was defeated by forty thousand Hungarians. The celebrated Eneas Piccolomini, Pope Pius II, who succeeded Pope Callixtus, assembled a Congress at Mantua in order to reconcile the European princes and induce them to save Christendom. But with a few exceptions they were too busily engaged in the mutual slaughter of one another's subjects to heed the voice of the Pope. The English and French were at war, and none but the Venetians were willing to do anything to resist the Turks. Bosnia and Herzegovina, the present seat of insurrection, were invaded, and the last Christian king was flayed alive.

It is impossible not to notice that the subject of Church *music* is attracting more and more attention. Bishop Ryan, of Buf-

falo, treated of this question at great length in his recent pastoral.

It is unquestioned and unquestionable that Gregorian chant has received the highest indorsement, and is the only real ecclesiastical music. It is almost equally clear that, on the other hand, figured music has received the approval of the Church, and is not unlawful. If the one dates from early ages, and has been used by generations of saints, who can forget that Haydn, Mozart, Lambillotte, and Cherubini, have produced noble strains, and such that can never be forgotten or disused.

Gregorian chant, to be appreciated, should be well performed, otherwise it is drowsy and drawling or monotonous. On the other hand, how often do we not hear choirs of amateurs murdering Mozart's Twelfth! Gregorian chant seems more appropriate for Lent, Advent, and Holy Week, while more joyous strains harmonize with Easter and Whitsuntide.

The diocese looks to the Cathedral or mother church as its model. Here, if anywhere, should the true Gregorian be well heard. In the Cathedral of Philadelphia, to mention only one out of many, every Holy Week is to be heard each year such a rendition of the ecclesiastical music as leaves nothing to be desired.

SPIRITUALISM has fallen under the ban in England! one Dr. Slade having been convicted of vagrancy, and sentenced to three months imprisonment. Spiritualism is a humbug; but we suppose that, in this country, it would be neither possible or desirable to send the professors of it to jail. The cry of persecution would be raised, and a conviction would be difficult to secure.

Divested of its technical form, the sentence condemns Slade for pretended communications with the spirits of the departed, and for professing to receive messages written on a slate by the spirits of the dead. That such a gross superstition should be practiced in the nineteenth century, and that English Protestants in such numbers should be found among the votaries of this "new religion," is a fact which deserves more attention that it has yet received. Had this degrading superstition broken out among the "benighted" Catholics of France or Spain, Italy or Belgium, or more especially Ireland, what an outcry and what denunciations should we not have heard from the enlightened Protestant press in England and America!

THE armistice so peremptorily demanded by Russia on the last day of October was conceded by Turkey, who has also agreed to a conference of the great powers. Events, however, have followed fast. At the Lord

Mayor's banquet, Lord Beaconsfield made an address which gave great offence to the Russian Czar, who replied by one of equal vigor, addressed to the citizens of Moscow. 100,000,000 of roubles were asked of the Russian people by way of loan, and more than this amount was subscribed in a week. Armies are concentrating on the Danube and pontoons are ready to transport troops over that river. All the railways in Southern Russia are in the hands of the government, and the passage of troops and material of war is incessant. On the side of Turkey there is equal warlike activity. English engineers are assisting in laying out defences for Constantinople. A motley array of soldiers drawn from the Asiatic provinces are assembling at Adrianople, Sophia, Widdin, Trebisond and other places, and torpedoed are being laid down in the harbors.

It is a fact that in the West and South of America there exists often a scarcity of priests. The children are growing up uninstructed in their duties, and ignorant of all that relates to the next world.

To supply this want of priests, it has been proposed to establish a society similar to "The Work of Our Lady of Help" at Rome. This society takes from poor schools, orphan-asylums, and other institutions, such boys as give evidence of possessing the germs of those qualities that go to make a good priest. These boys the "Work" educates and prepares for holy orders, leaving them the choice of becoming secular, regular, or missionary priests. Last year one hundred children were thus under training, of whom thirty-five completed the course, and were ordained. Twenty-one of these Levites chose the foreign missions, eight entered religious orders, and six became secular clergymen.

A similar society established in every diocese of America would, no doubt, be equally good.

A CONTEMPORARY has taken up a subject we have several times referred to, viz., the bad taste often displayed in religious pictures. And, indeed, what silly-looking representations, it says, of sacred subjects painters, sculptors, and engravers do often produce! The Virgin is given a doll's head, and a doll's expressionless face. The other saints, the angels, and even our Lord himself, are as cruelly ill-treated. Where the sublimity of the subject should inspire the artist, and beauty and expression should be most apparent, ugliness and distortion reign. The tawdry daubs in the print shops, the wretchedly drawn figures in engravings in prayer-books, the ill-favored sculptures in a number of churches, excite more disgust

than veneration. The beholder cannot help his aversion, when he thinks that, in beauty and expression, the pictures on brands of cigars and paper-collar boxes surpass the representations of the saints and angels of God.

THE Bishop of Gap, in France, has issued another pastoral, in which he defines still more plainly the Catholic position as regards political parties. The Church is not confined to any one party, nor obliged, at all times and seasons, to defend any particular form of government. She has existed in the pagan Roman empire, where pure absolutism prevailed. She flourishes in England and Belgium, where a constitutional monarchy is the accepted form. For a century she has existed in the Federal Republic of the United States. In the middle ages the holy Roman empire had an elected and not an hereditary sovereign. In France, now, she does not oppose a conservative republic, as long as that republic does not attack her Divine-given rights. If it did, she would oppose the republic not because it was a republic, but because it was unjust. She has often opposed kings, and often has resisted the popular will when that will was not founded on justice and right.

As the English Parliament is not now in session, the Irish members have an opportunity of addressing their constituents. Mr. Mitchell Henry and Captain Nolen addressed the people of Galway at Ballinasloe, and Lord Francis Conyngham those of Clare at Ennis. Mr. O'Conner Power, M.P. for Mayo, has been lecturing lately in Philadelphia with great acceptability. His name suggests the mention of the fact, that the *Freeman*, the *Dublin Nation*, the *Irishman*, the *Belfast Examiner*, the *Wexford People*, and other organs of Irish opinion, comment very severely on the refusal of Grant to receive the Irish address. One of them, however, is of the opinion, that indirectly it will do good, as the world is thus advertised of the fact that Ireland still exists, and protests against the English connection.

THE death of Cardinal Antonelli has called forth many tributes to his ability as a diplomatist, and his virtues as a man and a Catholic. These tributes came from all sources, the English press, bigoted as it is, contributing to swell the chorus. The *Times*, *Daily News*, *Telegraph*, and *Saturday Review*, are particularly eulogistic.

The late work of Pomponio Leto on the Vatican Council has called forth diverse criticism; the *London Quarterly* reviewing it, and with a rehash of the old, stale, and disproved arguments about the council being

intimidated into voting Papal Infallibility. The *Dublin Review* simultaneously published an exposure of this work.

WHEN real dangers do not menace our Canadian neighbors, imaginary ones startle them from their equanimity. A "Fenian scare" terrified the inhabitants of Granby and St. Albans lately. Nothing could well be more foolish or unlikely than another raid into Canada. Its only result would be to inflict great injury upon the social and political interests of Catholics and of Irishmen in Canada. The Orangemen in Canada are always too glad to get any pretext to air their exuberant "loyalty" to the British crown, and on that ground to claim special privileges and immunity in insulting their Catholic fellow citizens.

ANOTHER of the devoted band of Missionary Priests who came to America to evangelize the colored people is dead. Rev. James Gore, a priest of the Missionary Society of St. Joseph's of the Sacred Heart, Mill Hill, London, died on Nov. 16th, at Charleston. He was one of the first to volunteer for the work, and came to America in 1871. After laboring four years in Baltimore he visited Charleston, where he has since toiled to save the souls of the negroes. In this work he died in harness. He was a native of Woolten, near Liverpool, England.

THE new St. Patrick's Church at Hartford, Conn., was dedicated on Sunday, Nov. 26th, by Right Rev. T. Galberry, D.D.O.S.A. It is a splendid building, and cost \$150,000, built from the designs of Mr. P. C. Keely, of Brooklyn, being the 365th large church edifice he has constructed; one for every day of the year. At its dedication, three bishops and a large number of priests assisted.

Corner-stone layings and dedications occurred lately at Guilford, Conn.; Thorn-dike, Mass., and other places.

HIS Eminence Cardinal Patrizi is dead. He studied for the sacred office of the priesthood, and, after a brilliant career, was ordained. He was created a cardinal on the 11th of July, 1836. He became Dean of the Sacred College, and also held the titles of Archbishop of Ostia and Velletri, Archpriest of the Basilica of St. John of Lateran, and Grand Prior of the Order of Malta. He was zealous, learned, and pious. His Holiness, Pius IX, was warmly attached to him, and his decease is the subject of great sorrow.

ON Nov. 22d, Rev. F. E. Boyle, Pastor

of St. Peter's, Washington, celebrated his silver jubilee. He opened the first free Catholic and public school in Washington, with 400 pupils.

Rev. Alexander Czmitkovicz, C.S.S.R., the patriarch of the renowned Redemptorist Order in America, celebrated his golden jubilee in New Orleans, on Sunday, Nov. 19th. He is 70 years of age, and made his religious vows in Vienna, Austria, 1826.

THE situation in South Carolina is one calculated to try the patience of the people of that State, to unsettle public opinion, and to discredit the republican form of government. Two legislatures sitting simultaneously in one city, indicates a condition of affairs which in any other country would lead to riots and bloodshed. That it has not yet done so speaks well for the forbearance of the educated portion of the population and the respect they have for law.

It is gratifying to observe the fact that the Catholic custom of being married at a Nuptial Mass is spreading and increasing. Among recent ones, Mr. Kelly, the well-known leader of Tammany Hall, was married on the 21st of November, to Miss Theresa Mullen, niece of His Eminence Cardinal McCloskey. The marriage was private, only a few friends being present.

The custom of night marriages is uncatholic and should not meet with favor.

BISHOP O'CONNOR is hard at work in Nebraska, and the Jesuits have just been giving a mission at Omaha, which has been remarkably successful.

Archbishop Bayley's health is improving. Bishop Hendricksen has returned from a visit to Ireland. Bishop Manucy of Brownsville, and Bishop Pellicier of San Antonio, both in Texas, are working like heroes, in very difficult fields of labor. The results are already apparent.

CARDINAL SIMEONI has succeeded His Eminence Cardinal Antonelli, as Secretary of State. He is 60 years of age; created Cardinal Priest on March 15th, 1875, the same day as Cardinal McCloskey, he was Nuncio in Spain last year. He was Secretary of the Congregation of the Propaganda when Cardinal Barnabo was Prefect.

NEARLY \$14,000 has been subscribed in aid of the building of the Hartford Cathedral. The churches not only of Hartford, but throughout the diocese, have responded generously and nobly to the appeal of Bishop Galberry for assistance in the erection of his cathedral.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE VOICE OF JESUS TO THE MIND AND HEART OF CHRISTIANS; A Book on the Passion. Divided into Two Parts. By a Passionist Missionary Priest. New York: P. O'Shea, Publisher. 1876.

The author of this excellent work has adopted as the basis of his plan the following directions of St. Teresa: "Represent to your imagination Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, present to you, near you, in a sensible form! Look at him devoutly in that state or condition wherein he really was in the mystery of his holy life and passion, on which you desire to meditate. Listen to him attentively; for Jesus speaks to the heart of those who lovingly wish to converse with him. He will inspire you with the words and sentiments which he desires to hear from your heart."

In accordance with this plan the author has thought it proper "to place in the blessed mouth of our Lord Jesus the dolorous narrative of his sufferings," believing that thereby, first, "pious Christians will pay more respectful attention to these sacred truths, when announced by Jesus Christ in person; secondly, in consequence of this, the history of the passion will remain more deeply impressed upon their devout hearts;" and, thirdly, "the narrative of these bitter sufferings learned from the sacred lips of the Divine Victim will move the soul to sentiments of heartfelt compassion and love for Jesus suffering, to sorrow for sin, to acts of self-immolation and penance, to the practice of virtue, and to an active zeal for the salvation of souls that have cost so dear to Jesus crucified."

In the fulfilment of his plan, the author has taken from the four Evangelists the whole history of the passion. From the mystery thus proposed for meditation, he draws some reflections, pointing out the fruits that should be gathered from it, the resolutions that should be made, and the pious practices that should be followed. Each meditation is concluded with a prayer to Jesus suffering, and a short aspiration to our Blessed Lady.

As a manual of devout meditations, especially to religious, and to others who aspire to a life of special devotion, the work cannot but be highly useful.

IRELAND: POEMS OF PLACES. Edited by Henry W. Longfellow. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co. 1876.

Mr. Longfellow's other volumes of *Poems of Places* have evinced such just poetic discrimination and taste that it would have been matter of great surprise, if, with the

wealth of materials which poetry descriptive of Ireland affords, he had failed to compile an acceptable volume.

Among the authors who have been laid under contribution, are Mangan, Campbell, Moore, Aubrey de Vere, Gerald, Griffin, Davis, Joyce, Allingham, D'Arcy McGee, Milliken, Frazier, Simmons, Swift, Callavan, C. G. Halpine, Goldsmith, F. Mahony (Father Prout), and others. Almost every place in Ireland remarkable for beauty or associated with its history is commemorated in one or another of these poems. To persons of Irish descent, and to all others who care to acquaint themselves with the scenery of Ireland, with its sad history, legendary or authentic, so far as it is embalmed in poetry, or with the peculiar genius and spirit of its people, this volume will be a delightful companion in their leisure hours.

THE ILLUSTRATED CATHOLIC FAMILY ALMANAC FOR THE UNITED STATES, 1877. Catholic Publication Society, 9 Warren Street, New York. P. F. Cunningham, 29 South Tenth Street, Philadelphia.

The Illustrated Catholic Almanac for 1877 contains, as usual, a great variety of interesting reading matter, and many useful tables. The lists of the Roman Pontiffs, the Early Irish Kings, Catholic Bishops of America, Presidents of the United States, etc., will be found useful; the sketches of the lives of Pope Pius VII, Dr. Brownson, Bishop Verot, Dr. Moriarty, Archbishop Connolly, and of interesting places in Ireland and America, are well written, and illustrated with cuts. The *Almanac* will be found convenient in every Catholic household.

EXCERPTA EX RITUALI ROMANO PRO ADMINISTRATIONE SACRAMENTORUM, AD COMMODIAREM USUM MISSIONARUM. In Septentrionalis Americæ Fœderatæ Provinciis. Editioni Quinta. Baltimore: Apud Kelly, Piet et Socios. MDCCCLXXVI.

This volume of excerpts from the Roman Missal, published with the approval of the Most Reverend Archbishop of Baltimore, is well adapted both as regards selection and arrangement of matter, beautiful, clear typography, binding, compactness of form, and small size, as a pocket manual for the use of priests upon the mission. It contains, in Latin, English, and German, the directions and prayers for the administration of all the sacraments, together with other important matter, and also several blank pages for memoranda.

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